

THE COMMONWEAL

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THE PERPETUAL PAPACY

OUR NEIGHBOR, the *Nation*, in its issue for September 2, calls our attention to the news from various directions "which indicates very clearly that the power of the Papacy is waning and with it that of the Roman Catholic Church itself." In addition to such signs of the times, the *Nation* asks if American Catholics are not growing indifferent. "We seem to recall no swelling, resounding protests; no passionate processions through our streets bespeaking the intercession of high heaven, no magnificent mass meetings in Carnegie Hall to ask that lightnings destroy the idolators and heretics in Spain"—which does seem like an oversight on the part of American Catholics, considering what a large number of thunder storms have been running wild this summer. "But what else could have been expected?" the *Nation* opines. "Could anyone believe that a Church which still believes in miracles and the superhuman could remain unchanged in a wholly changing world which has seen more than one apparently safely anchored institution swept from its moorings?"

There is much more of this sort of stuff, including a sigh of regret that the Pope gave up "his mysterious and impressive" part in the world's drama as "the

prisoner of the Vatican." When he played that rôle it was so much easier to maintain "the fiction that he was god-like, exalted and apart." But a pope who drives in a motor car and speaks over the radio; no; it will not do; it is clear proof that "the Papacy wanes."

We have read few comments on the Papacy or the Catholic Church which were more futile, or which more completely missed the real points involved in any intelligent discussion of those subjects, than the *Nation's* editorial; although for shallowness of thought, and cheap vulgarity of language, an article by Jay Franklin in the September issue of the *Forum*, in which the Church is compared to a decayed old lady seeking to "have her face lifted," and to revive her forces with gland treatments, quite easily reaches the lowest level of journalism to which any supposedly reputable magazine has yet descended. Nevertheless, both the *Nation* editorial, and the Jay Franklin article are well worth reading thoughtfully. If some seeker for a Ph.D. degree desired to do a useful bit of research, he might take both these articles as a starting point for an anthology of writings, journalistic and otherwise, in which the central theme would be the belief that now, at least, no matter how often similar ideas

had been proven vain and false in the past, now the good news must be proclaimed that the Papacy was waning—that the Papacy was dying—that the Papacy was dead. The research would take the anthologist backward in time for a millennium or two; but that should add to the zest of a real researcher. Perhaps some university might get one of its angels to endow a special chair to perpetuate the gathering of similar prophecies. Some future report might well be illustrated by that artist from New Zealand whom Macaulay saw in vision sketching the ruins of London, far in the times to be, when the Catholic Church, however, would still be functioning with undiminished life.

But it is not because the *Nation* editorial, like the *Forum* article, are so trivial that we call our readers' attention to them. They do not prove the waning of the Papacy, or the Catholic Church, but they do prove the waning of the power of modern journalism, of the sort vaguely classed as "liberal," to deal at all adequately with such a subject as the Papacy, or the Catholic Church. Both the *Nation* editorial and the *Forum* article are but recent examples of a flood of poorly informed and shallow prognostications that the Faith is dying, or dead, poured out in books, articles, addresses and even in what are still called sermons. And if such writers and speakers are so ineffective when they deal with so fundamental a subject as religion, and the institutions of religion, what can their emotions, and impressions, and moods and opinions be worth when they attempt to lead their readers through the mazes of other and more practical problems?

When, for example, the *Nation* writer adduces for proof of the waning of the power of the Papacy, and of the Catholic Church, the struggles of the Church with the State, or with groups of revolutionaries usurping the office of the State, in Mexico, or Spain, or elsewhere—what in the world can he really mean? He does not tell us; so we can only guess; but his general idea seems to be that the Catholic Church is essentially and necessarily bound up with the particular arrangements which may exist in certain times and certain places between it and the government, or ruler, or state system, which may happen to prevail at certain times, in certain places. But even if, eventually, such struggles as those proceeding in Spain, Mexico and elsewhere should result—as some of them may—in the utter destruction of the temporal means by which the Church functions in such places, why confuse a breakdown of the machinery of religion, in one place, with the death of the Church itself? Even an elementary knowledge of history should suffice to check such wishful thinking. No country, for example, ever made so crushing an attack upon the Church as England; or ever succeeded so thoroughly in destroying its temporal system, or appropriating its property. Neither Mexico nor Spain has as yet approached the degree of efficiency reached by England under Elizabeth and maintained for centuries. Yet England today is far from talking about the waning of the Church. Japan wiped

out the Catholic Church some centuries ago—yet today Catholic universities and schools and churches, seminaries and a native priesthood, are spreading there. Ireland was subjected to a persecution which a Protestant historian, Lecky, declared to have surpassed the worst rigors of the Roman emperors in the infancy of the Church; yet the Church there somehow survived; not only so, but Irish Catholics spread their faith in America, Canada, Australia. After Luther had done his bit in putting the Papacy where it belongs in the view of its enemies, that is to say, out of business, down and out, we seem to remember that there was something called the Counter-Reformation, and that what was lost in Europe was largely recovered, and, as Macaulay says, "the conquests of the Roman Church in the New World (America) compensated her for her losses in the Old."

The point is, that deplorable to Catholics as are any losses from the membership of the Church, or any diminution of the spiritual or moral power of the divinely appointed Head of the Church, in any place, at any time, they know that such losses, or such a waning of power, is not, and cannot be, permanent. The Kingdom is not of this world. Those who do not believe as Catholics believe are of course quite justified by their own beliefs, or absence of belief, in thinking otherwise; but at least, when they write in the *Nation* or the *Forum*, or anywhere else, they should recall the facts of history as well as the news of the day as it passes, and deal with realities, no matter how they may interpret such realities. The plain fact of the matter today is that the Papacy is ascendant in its true power, which is moral and spiritual, leading a revival of the Church which is but the last of a long series of such revivals that mark all epochs of history for two thousand years.

WEEK BY WEEK

THE SCOPE of Mr. Hoover's action to suspend payments due under the Young Plan is, to our mind, so well summed up in the following passage from a recent National City Bank bulletin that we are taking the liberty of quoting it. "When the Hoover moratorium was first proposed," avers the report, "its purpose was stated to be 'to

What
Next?

give time to permit debtor governments to recover their national prosperity.' It would appear miraculous, however, for such recovery to take place within a year. Two months already of the period of grace have elapsed, and soon people will be concerned with the question of what is to happen after July 1, 1932. If nothing is to be done, the world at that time will be in a more difficult situation than it was in June this year, when the moratorium was first proposed. It is inconceivable that governments will permit the situation to drift in this way. Nevertheless, the uncertainty that exists is casting a blight over business everywhere. So

long as no one knows what is going to happen in Europe, business cannot be expected to go ahead with confident plans for the future, and this hesitancy is one of the factors tending to depress the commodity markets." Written between the lines of this report is the whole attitude of the great bankers toward current financial and political problems.

THE OFFICIAL communiqué announcing the settlement of a controversy which once threatened to effect an open break between the Vatican and the Quirinal, is an exceedingly interesting document. To be sure, we quote only from the Associated Press despatches, which may need some complement. The Catholic Action clubs will reopen, but on the condition that they function as purely diocesan organizations, the officers of which will be appointed with the understanding that they are not anti-Fascist or interested in politics. It remains to be seen whether the clubs will flourish under these conditions as they did previously. The records will help us all to see just how much truth there was in Mussolini's original assertions—and that there may have been some truth need surprise no one, because Italy has been seething with anti-Fascist sentiment which could not become vocal. Educational matters have been arranged on the basis of a similar partition between the spiritual and the temporal powers. Religious instruction will be given by "priests appointed as chaplains in all sections of the Balilla and Avanguardisti organizations." On the other hand, "material, physical and athletic education of youth" is to be a purely Fascist business, even in Catholic colleges and schools. Finally a quite specific pledge is given that Catholic Action will collaborate with the national-class coöperation scheme so dear to Mussolini's heart. If these announcements are all correct, and we assume they are, the Church is more definitely out of Italian politics than even it is out of American politics.

UNEMPLOYMENT insurance of some kind is being demanded by larger and larger numbers of citizens. The support thus given to an idea which few would countenance three or four years ago is, no doubt, largely based on sentiment. People out of work naturally feel that they ought not to starve, innocent as they are of blame; and their more fortunate neighbors are beginning to think that some organized plan of stable relief would be better than a perennial series of calls for charity. These conclusions are worthy of unstinting praise, but it is only too true that an impracticable scheme, hastily entered upon, would soon prove a target for public indignation. Few problems are more difficult than social insurance. Broadly speaking, four solutions have been advanced: first, universal old-age insurance, automatically effective at a given time and counted upon to make room in industry for younger people without disturbing the general

equilibrium of supply and consumption; second, the "dole" as established in England, which makes the giving of sustenance to those unable to earn a normal function of a quasi-Socialistic government; third, the building up of so-called "unemployment reserves" by industry itself, with a view to tiding workers over slack periods; fourth, the German system, which is a compromise between two and three, with the difference that the workers also contribute directly to the fund.

THE FIRST solution is chimerical, though in theory it possesses a certain fascination; the second is unthinkable in the United States and precarious anywhere, since it undoubtedly creates financial and psychological evils. The third system would be ideal if it could be made to work. Some corporations have already built up unemployment reserves, and others are capable of doing as much. But there are many industries which would find such a task far beyond their means, and others which can hardly be relied upon to undertake the venture. It is highly desirable that an adequate survey of the possibilities be made, but at present we can only surmise that the chances for inaugurating system three are slight. There remains the German idea, which has been thoroughly tested by experience and in formulating which talent of the highest order was employed. This idea has not passed unscathed through the furnace of contemporary depression, but what idea has? On the other hand, the German system is not immediately transferrable to the United States. It is bound up with a conception of collective bargaining and labor market control not familiar to this country. Moreover it relies upon a labor and bureaucratic psychology not acclimatized in America. The whole matter demands a great deal of careful thought, not to be expected on the one hand from those who simply refuse to believe that unemployment may soon be a chronic industrial phenomenon in this great country, and on the other hand from those who hold that any arrangement would be satisfactory which produced the money. Our own guess is that some form of unemployment insurance, desirably state but conceivably federal, will be normal in the United States within five years; our hope, that the form adopted will be socially and economically commendable.

LONG since aware of the qualities which have made Bishop James Cannon, jr., the man he was and incidentally is, we were none the less a bit startled to learn of his resemblance to Julius Caesar. Great Caesar had seven stenographers, Bishop Cannon had eight bank accounts. Nor, if we can credit the assertions made by Senator Nye and his investigating committee, did the versatile Roman pass with greater alacrity from one amanuensis to another than the bishop was able to saunter among his various caches. The only hitch seems to have come about when the Cannon memory failed, leaving certain contribu-

tions to the business of defeating Al Smith in Virginia unannounced and unaccounted for. A New Jersey banker unearthed records of two among these blushing violets, both checks from Senator Frelinghuysen and totaling \$10,000. Elsewhere footprints of a \$5,000 donation from Mr. Claudius Huston, prominent member of the Republican National Committee, were discovered. The curious thing seems to be that while the committee knew about the Cannon crusade and is said to have considered it "bad ethics," it made no effort to convert the straying bishop from the error of his ways. One would have thought that so immaculate an organization as the Republican party was throughout the last campaign, would have sensed the chance to turn Mr. Samuel Seabury loose on the watchtowers of Methodism. No doubt this was an oversight. Persuaded that Bishop Cannon was hard up for money, the generous men of Republicanism just couldn't help themselves. Well, Caesar-Cannon will doubtless fall on the steps of the capitol (figuratively speaking, to be sure): but his ghost will haunt other places than Philippi.

IT IS normally difficult to realize the actual physical suffering caused by such a period of economic collapse as that in which we are living. The American who keeps his eyes open will not miss revealing signs, although the sum total of the nation's wealth and the amount of relief afforded suffice to clear our streets of misery in group formation. Matters are worse elsewhere. In a recent address delivered in honor of Saint Elizabeth, the Cardinal Archbishop of Munich declared: "We bishops today announce to the world: There is in Germany a real, creeping famine, particularly in industrial centers where unemployment rules. That fact cannot be masked by any display of luxury and prodigality in certain city thoroughfares. And since the total number of the unemployed is increasing, the need will likewise mount, during the coming winter especially. Things may even become as bad as they were eight years ago. At that time the children of a Munich school were asked what they wanted the Christ Child to bring them at Christmas time. And one child answered, 'A big piece of bread.' Not a cake or sweets, but only a big piece of bread!" Such phenomena are of greater social importance than political debates or long-range remedies. It is elemental Christianity which is now facing a test.

MANY and many a great man had gone to take the cure at some Central European resort. There was Dostoevski, there was Bismarck, there were whole telephone directories of others. But within the memory of living man, no famous seeker after health ever received the attention accorded Mayor Jimmie Walker. And why? It is probably natural that burghers of Manhattan, especially in these exciting times, should send their imaginations and

photographers scampering after the sovereign of City Hall. But Europe was apparently quite as intrigued. To be sure, almost any American of some slight importance can get a luncheon in his honor these days. Berliners especially like to assemble for the noonday meal, which is usually better under present trying conditions when concocted by honor than when dished up by the hausfrau. In this instance, however, it was Jimmie this, and Jimmie that—even Jimmie, mind your soul. The records indicate, at least, that Jimmie expended more attention on his spirit than upon his body. Apart from one historic moment when he quaffed a bottle of mineral water through a straw at Carlsbad, the mayor's cure might, apparently, have been as efficiently undertaken on upper Broadway. It must, however, have been an interesting experience. Sustained and soothed, Mr. Walker can resume his arduous duties with new vigor. Would that all the mayors of our great country could acquire just that perspective!

THE CURRENT *New Republic* carries an article by Bertrand Russell on his school for children. Some of it, naturally, we find debatable and some mistaken beyond the possibility of debate. But one observation is sound and true, and has so much significance by reason of its context that we note it here. "Modern children," says Mr. Russell, "are often called heartless, and many become so because, on the one hand, their elders do not love them and try to make up by elaborate spoiling and extravagant liberty; while on the other hand, those who love them are influenced by Freud and Watson to keep themselves withdrawn from the children so that they shall never become emotionally entangled with adults. We find that children suffer deeply in their self-respect if they feel themselves unloved, and this makes them savage and destructive. We believe that more people are spoiled by lack of love than by excess of it. The adults here try therefore to give the children the . . . undemanding affection which make[s] them feel safe." This is at once a piece of neglected common sense and a vitally important truth. That one of the world's leading rationalists should formulate it so sanely is something of a paradox. But these oases of humor and humanity in the midst of the bleakest and most inhuman first principles are not, thank heaven, unknown.

WE ARE grateful for this one exactly because of Mr. Russell's eminence in that dreary universe of negation and formal despair. His word has weight with the radical thinkers who possess so much power today that they largely color the positive prevailing thought and practice in this matter. It may help, therefore, to modify their drift in two important ways: by reducing the now too indiscriminate practice of child psychiatry, and by restoring the credit of the home. There is no doubt that, among them and hence, by reflection, among great numbers of the merely educated and half-edu-

cated, the home as a matrix of child character and happiness has been under very heavy fire. Once admit, however, that the child's first need is love and the home is reinstated. It becomes the unit of normal, that is child-rearing, society. It must. For, in the main, those who beget and bear children, love those children greatly—if only (not to stray above what any rationalist will admit) by nature's dispensation. And, in the main, they are the only ones who do. To waste a commodity already there is stupid. To waste a vital and unreplaceable commodity is irreparably tragic. Incidentally, of course, other, obscurer secularists have anticipated Mr. Russell's observations. Numbers of non-religious social workers have taken to declaring with increasing certainty that an imperfect home frequently produces better results than a perfect institution; and research among adult children of divorce reveals that a large percentage of unstable and maladjusted natures come from these broken homes, where parental love could not be enveloping and continuous.

MOST of us have learned to discount cancer "cures" in proportion to the assurance with which they are put forth. There is, indeed, a positive obligation to do so. So dreadful are the ravages of this disease, and so baffling has it proved in treatment, that we must all avoid giving unwarranted hopes to those suffering from it, whose subsequent disappointment might be too much like despair. However, it can be recorded that progress, though slow, has been definite. More and more cases are diagnosed in the early stage, when a cure is relatively more likely; and in the field of surgical technique, post-operation treatment and even dietetics, experiment goes on without ceasing, and with a considerable total volume of good effect. What is apparently an encouraging step forward is now reported in a supplement to the *American Journal of Cancer* by Dr. William H. Kraemer, of Jefferson Hospital, Philadelphia. Experiments conducted in England by Dr. Bell some time ago established that lead has a destructive effect upon cancer tissue, but little could be made of the knowledge in view of the deadly effect of that element upon the body as well. According to Dr. Kraemer, manganese can now be mixed with the lead in such a way as to reduce its poisonous properties to a practical minimum. The report is "preliminary" and tentative, but it would seem to furnish a reasonable basis for future hope at least.

WE ARE pleased with the Middle Western sheriff who leaped into his little sedan and pushed across half the continent to get his man in Newark. He reminds us of the heroes of our favorite movies, the Westerns, and where he departs from the type, it is only to better it. Fightin' Bill, the arm of the law in Painted Post, or One-shot Charlie, United States marshal from Dead Man's Gulch, dis-

play the same resoluteness in running down their prey—though, to be sure, when they slip into Sonora on his trail (he always goes to Sonora) their manly hearts beat to the rhythm of Tony's hoofs instead of to the throb of Lizzie's engine. But when they have cinched the criminal, they unbend from their lofty stature and become like common men; they go to the Helldorado to see the girls dance, or sit in at a game of stud at Faro Jim's. Not so, we gather, Sheriff Cuffe, of Roberts County, South Dakota. After he had positively identified his prisoner in the Essex County jail, his official hosts offered to show him the sights—among them a city named New York which Mr. Cuffe knew only by hearsay. Mr. Cuffe would have none of it. Would he, then, care to try the to him also novel experience of an airplane flight over the ocean? Equally no. Mr. Cuffe had come to get an embezzler, not to gallivant. His austerity finally relaxed to the extent of allowing him to go to a restaurant near by; after which he retired—at nine o'clock—to be ready for an early start back in the sedan with the prisoner. For anything so civic, so positively toga-like (to fall back upon Montague Tigg) as this, we must go to Victor Hugo or Republican Rome.

HUGE CLOUDY SYMBOLS

EDUCATION in a modern community may take one of two forms. Either it will be the affair of a quite exclusive caste, set aside for the purpose of conserving and increasing the store of human knowledge, or it will be the program of a ministry determined to give even the stenographer another fact or idea. There is much to be said for the second conception, which in our time gets a vast amount of practical support. But no argument in its favor has the force of learning's own dissatisfaction with exclusiveness—or learning's own surmisal that a tent in a vacuum is rather bleak. When Bismarck was young and applying himself diligently to the story of economics and politics, the care-free rudimentariness of the country's intelligence round about worried him into writing at least a dozen very interesting letters. He couldn't help wondering if he were going into exile—or into the company of the uncomfortably elect. Possibly a similar puzzledness underlies Dr. Johnson's remark to the gentry of the Boar's Head, made as an affix to the statement that he had just heard a good story: "Since you will not understand it, sirs, I shall not repeat it."

Huge cloudy symbols of this matter are afforded by the extension of cultural training not merely to endless throngs of regular students, but likewise to the adult public. Thousands upon thousands of people who have jobs, or are tied to homes, emerge at several times during the week for a dose of education. They sit at night-school benches, attend lecture courses, use such media of wisdom as the radio with compelling earnestness. It is a phenomenon characteristic of all nations, but very especially of our own. What do these people

want, and what do they get? What is the measurable effect upon public opinion? We have long since tried to find out. Now comes a book, "The Making of Adult Minds in a Metropolitan Area," by Frank Lorimer (Macmillan), which purports to have analyzed the educational quests of Brooklyn.

This book is in several respects disappointing. Like all inquiries that rely upon figures peculiarly difficult to come by, it offers a great deal of tabulated information on matters of no importance and no data whatever on some things of vital interest. Statistics are applicable only to mass eventualities: the individual slips through them as a determined summer thunder shower breaks through the barriers of weather predictions. Nevertheless there are many good, solid chunks in Mr. Lorimer's book on which to hang the foolscap of philosophy. There are just one or two displays we wish to make. First is the fact that a fair guess can be risked to the effect that 40 percent of all Brooklyn's mature citizens have sought out some form of adult education. To be sure the search was, in the majority of instances, based upon a desire to learn something that would add to the pay check. Even so, however, teachers of philosophies, literatures and arts managed to get in a huge total of remarks.

Second comes the well-known circumstance that, at least until very recently, interest in social problems was confined almost exclusively to professional people. Doctors, lawyers, clergymen, teachers, welfare workers busily discuss what's wrong with the world. But apparently the evils thus isolated either do not exist for the great majority of clerical or manual workers, or have been boiled down to the size of the weekly emolument. The population of Brooklyn was utterly inert when it came to considering the principles upon which modern social life is based or the results which accrue from those principles. Beyond any question, the inexpressiveness of American labor is the most important characteristic of our existing civilization. Whereas the fountain-source of collective experience in such countries as Germany, England, Russia and (to a more limited extent) France is the consciousness of labor, the United States has waded deep into industrialism without the appurtenance of a workers' psychology. It is said by those who know, that conventions of the American Federation of Labor consist of speeches interspersed with guzzling, just as conventions of Elks consist of speeches interspersed with guzzling. Not a single creative action—not even a pamphlet—can be credited to American labor during the past decade.

It is this omnipresent leveling of everything to a new semi-bourgeois standard that marks the quality of our adult education. To be sure, many teachers will tell you about youths or maidens in night-school classes, whose diligence and gifts are superior by far to the collegiate average. Yet even these succumb to the cultural pressure of the community as a whole. During the rosiest years of plenty, what may be called the determinism of economic instability has set the clock

of thought. Development of mind and soul has been conceived of as an instrument, with the aid of which one might reap through social contact the monetary fruit of expended time. One chapter of Mr. Lorimer's book adduces twelve sample mentalities, a careful testing of which will pretty nearly show where we are at.

First of all, we are much better off than we think we are. The spectacle of hard-working tens of thousands, struggling along brightly on their \$25.00 a week and bent on getting just a little farther is a whole lot more worth watching than a football game. It requires no end of hard plugging and volitional vigor, this business of setting another foot on an honest ladder to success. In numerous cases, to be sure, individuals are goaded on by a species of mirage. They will not move ahead. Each passing year marks them more definitely as fixtures, until at last, smiling sadly, they pass into inoperativeness still convinced that another course in English, or another weekly hour of draughtsmanship, would have fetched them round the corner. But an industrial population which retains that huge sum total of optimism is worth trying to do something for.

It is probably against this background that one should evaluate current efforts to "advance" the public mind. Common people are indifferent to the philosophies and the arts, even in an increasing measure to religion (as Mr. Lorimer's survey hints once again), because they do not see what these things can do for them. Such a pragmatic test is, of course, immature and theoretically untenable. But when properly interpreted it is common sense itself. What place has the scholar's glowing passion, or the mystic's blest retirement, in existences the contours of which are fixed by a limited numbers of dollars a day, to be earned by dint of hard effort and spent on babies and bathtubs? We think the bathtub is, in its way, also a serviceable symbol. For the brilliant tile environment of modern plumbing, coveted as index to getting on in the world and to an appreciation of life's good things, has a value for the average man which vapid talk about authors does not possess. Religion, and in a lesser sphere culture, are idle states of mind when they do not mean some tangible value for the individual—some inspiring treasure which even life cannot tarnish.

And so the way in which to teach the public is by making it clear, in the persons of leaders themselves, that the so-called intellectual assets are not mere tools in the hands of a superior class—tools which they employ, sometimes with mediocre skill, in the business of their own advancement toward material blessings which the bookkeeper likewise covets. Every author who is first of all his own salesman, every scholar whose primary function is advertising himself, every teacher content to be as dull as dust if the powers which he will only let him lie—all these are adjudged properly by the public eye. They are inferior to bathtubs, what they offer is less significant than plumbing. But if those within the enclosure of wisdom began to realize this too, there is no telling what high romance might be the last event.

USURY AS A NEW ISSUE

By HENRY SOMERVILLE

MANY things mediaeval have returned to favor in our own time after suffering scorn and contumely for centuries. I make bold to prophesy that at no distant date there will be a startling revival of mediaeval morals in the matter of charging interest on money, or to use the old word, usury. The words interest and usury are here treated as synonyms, for if we distinguish between "moderate" and "excessive" charges for the use of money, calling the one respectfully interest and the other opprobriously usury, we depart from the sound mediaeval principle and embrace the modern sophistry.

In developing my case I wish to speak as an economist and say as little as possible about ethics, for as a layman I have no wish to dispute with moral theologians. Profit of a nature commonly called interest is allowed by canon law to be "not in itself illicit." The Holy Office has instructed confessors that the taking of a moderate and legal rate of interest is not sinful. Individual consciences need not be disturbed by the considerations of social policy to be put forward in this article, but it ought to be pointed out that the ancient anti-usury attitude of the Church has never been relaxed. It will be found that the official language tolerating "interest" is always extremely guarded, while in the discussions of theologians there is considerable difference of opinion as to how interest may be reconciled with ethical theory. Monsignor Parkinson in his "Primer of Social Science" observes that "the Church has given but a constructive approval to the whole financial system of interest." Dr. John A. Ryan, in his "Distributive Justice," cannot discover any better titles to interest than presumption, analogy and possession, and he envisages the possibility that interest may one day be formally and officially condemned by the Church. Nor will it be forgotten that Leo XIII in the "Rerum Novarum" enumerated among the major social evils:

. . . rapacious usury, which, although more than once condemned by the Church, is nevertheless, under a different guise, but with the like injustice, still practised by covetous and grasping men.

The nineteenth century, in its devotion to the doctrine of *laissez-faire*, classed anti-usury laws with witchcraft as belonging only to unenlightened ages. The twentieth century has returned to restrictions on money-lenders in Western countries and one of the most horrifying chapters in the report, just issued, of a Royal Commission on Labor in India describes the rav-

Taking interest was a sin throughout most of the Middle Ages; and under modern economic circumstances it is, at least in a measure, gravely dangerous. Mr. Somerville's analysis of the last fact may be questioned, but must be considered. Before the war economists were in virtual agreement that the normal rate of interest would tumble to 2 percent. Now—after a period during which the actual wealth of the world has been decimated by ruinous war—that rate has actually risen, even in highly civilized countries to 10 and 12 percent. Yes, there is something in this matter worth thinking about.—The Editors.

ages of usury among the poverty-stricken millions of the sub-continent. The majority of workers are in debt all their lives, being born in debt and dying in debt, the sons taking on the liabilities of the father. In the majority of cases the debt exceeds three months' wages.

The ordinary rate of interest paid is not less than 75 percent. The Royal Commission makes the following instructive comment:

Laws against usury have been a prominent feature of various religions and national codes, and the leading religions of India affirm the principle underlying them. Unfortunately, as we think, the influence of economic thought in the nineteenth century led to the removal of all legal restrictions on usurious practices in India, and it is only within the last generation that there has been a tendency to reimpose them.

However, to assail nineteenth-century economic thought on usury as regards the operations of common money-lenders is to flog a dead dog. There is more freshness in the indictment against lending at interest to governments. This is still almost universally considered to be the most morally unimpeachable of all forms of investment. I cast no stones at anybody, for I have held Victory Bonds myself, and when I sold them it was not because of moral scruples.

Interest is the one element assumed to be stable in an unstable economic world. Prices may fluctuate, profits become a minus quantity, wages may be slashed and rents adjusted—except when rent is really interest on capital—but interest claims are sacrosanct. They remain a fixed charge on the debtor whatever be the changes in his income and fortune. Contracts are made on the assumption that it is possible and proper to fix interest liabilities for periods of twenty years and even in perpetuity. Until quite recently no economist who challenged the validity of the presumptive claims of interest would have got a hearing. He would have been dismissed as a crank. The mentality of the modern world is a loan-market complex which takes the legitimacy and benefits of interest as indisputable. Great Britain is a country which for ten years or more has been losing her foreign markets. The reason is that British costs of production are higher than those of foreign competitors. A reduction of wages is almost unanimously regarded as necessary among impartial economists. One great reason why it is difficult to ask the workers to agree to reduced wages is that there would be no reduction in the payments to interest-receivers. National debt charges have gone up

from £16,000,000 to £277,000,000 and it is said that other fixed charges on industry have increased likewise.

It is the fixity and not the magnitude of interest that causes the mischief. It is a factor that causes disequilibrium in economic life because it cannot be adjusted to the productivity of human effort and the value of economic products. This is only another way of saying that interest is usury, a charge for the use of an unproductive thing, not a profit from ownership or part ownership of capital, using the word capital for wealth used productively. A loan of money is different from an investment of capital. The latter is an acquisition of productive property, the return on the investment depending on the realized value of the products. The loan-maker does not accept the risks of production, he does not claim the ownership of productive wealth; he claims a fixed amount of interest at regular periods in addition to the return of the principal, irrespective of the profitableness of the operations which his money has financed. The investor of capital, *prima facie*, adds to the resources of the community; a lender of money does this only indirectly, when he does it at all, and the risk he runs is not the risk of productive enterprise but of the solvency of the borrower. The Church which looks askance at lending at interest warmly approves of the investment of capital, regarding this as not only legitimate but a virtue and even a duty. There is a noteworthy passage in the recent encyclical, "Quadragesimo Anno":

The investment of superfluous income in securing favorable opportunities for employment, provided the labor employed produces results which are really useful, is to be considered, according to the teaching of the Angelic Doctor, an act of real liberality, particularly appropriate to the needs of our time.

Honor as well as profit is due to those who adventure their property in developing the resources of nature and extending industry and commerce. When their return is proportionate to their contribution and to the fruits of the enterprise, the investors are truly partners in industry. But when they are merely lenders they throw all the risks and responsibilities of the management of property on the borrowers, while endeavoring to assure themselves a fixed toll on production in addition to the repayment of their principal. This is the arrangement that the mediaevals denounced as unnatural, despite the admitted fact that in many cases it might be to the advantage of the borrower. During the modern era it has conceivably been to the advantage of borrowers in the majority of cases. I will express no opinion on that point. My thesis is that the system of loans at interest is proved an evil at the present time and is actually on the point of wholesale repudiation throughout the world. Dr. Bruening, the German Chancellor, is reported to have said in Paris the other day that the loans received by his own country had proved a bane and a burden. The same would surely be said by Australia which, to avoid default on its obligations to London, has devalued its internal

currency by 30 percent, and is planning a "voluntary" conversion loan which practically means a forced reduction of interest on bonds held by its own citizens. Australia lives chiefly by selling wool. Wool which sold for \$1.00 in 1928 was \$.60 in 1929 and \$.40 in 1930. Operating largely on borrowed money as she was, it became impossible for Australia to meet her obligations regarding fixed interest and debt redemption.

Australia is not an isolated nor a particularly extreme case. Brazil lives on the sale of coffee, the price of which has fallen between 40 and 50 percent in a single year. The value, not the quantity, of her exports dropped 30 percent from 1929 to 1930. Yet her obligations to pay interest abroad remain undiminished and are equal to something like two-fifths of her present total exports. What has happened to wool and coffee prices has happened also to sugar, tin, nitrates and practically every other commodity. So we see defaults by Bolivia and Peru and there are struggles to avoid default by Chile and Uruguay. There is no need to refer to grain prices and the distress of American farmers who have to meet payments on mortgages.

It cannot be pleaded that interest is only one cost among many and has no more responsibility for present economic difficulties than any other charge on production. Interest is peculiar, I would almost say unique, because it is fixed, and its fixity prevents the restoration of equilibrium between costs and prices which is essential to the proper functioning of the economic system. It is the necessity to meet their obligations that causes debtors to force goods on an already glutted market, driving prices lower and lower, and thus adding to their own difficulties which are due to the discrepancy between the charges they have to meet and the prices they receive for their goods.

The impossibility of the situation has become apparent to the creditors themselves. I say nothing about the Hoover moratorium, for I would not imply that the trouble is entirely or primarily due to war debts. A most revealing document just issued in England is the report of what is called the Macmillan Committee, appointed to consider the relations between finance and industry. It was a committee heavily weighted with representatives of the great banking interests of London. With one dissentient the committee recommends deflation of the currency, provided that other countries, especially the United States and France, will take that course along with England. Now England is probably still the leading creditor nation, or if she has recently been passed by the United States, she is a very close second. It marks a revolutionary, an almost incredible, change of policy, when the bankers of a creditor nation recommend inflation which, of course, means a writing-down of the debts owing to them. They realize that the burdens of debtors are now too great to be carried and they propose relief by an alteration of the standard of value.

A section of the Macmillan Report is headed "The

Immediate Necessity To Raise Prices above Their Present Level." I quote the following from the report:

The effect of the pressure of the present price level on the credit of debtor countries may, if it is long continued, prove so serious that their ability to contract new loans will be dangerously impaired. The vicious circle will then be complete. Creditor countries will find that the security of the loans which they have already made is evaporating. And the whole system of international loans, on which the trade and prosperity of the world and the development of its natural resources so largely depend, will be seriously affected.

So it has come to this: that inflation is advocated by creditors as the only way of maintaining the solvency of their debtors and keeping the loan system going. It is a system that has admittedly resulted in a vicious circle—the viciousness arising from interest being a charge on production without being relative to economic productivity. The world is now having a new demonstration of the unnaturalness of usury which is more intelligible to modern minds than are the reasonings of Aristotle and Aquinas on the essential barrenness of money.

PANGBORN AND HERNDON

By K. K. KAWAKAMI

WHEN the two American aviators, Pangborn and Herndon, flew to Tokio from Khabarovsk without a permit and took motion pictures of certain fortifications, they entered unawares into an atmosphere which had already been charged with suspicion and distrust of America. To make matters worse, these fortifications happened to be of particularly strategic importance, guarding as they do the narrow straits dividing the Hondo, the main island of Japan, and the Hokkaido, the north island—a gateway to the Japan Sea from the Pacific. It was as if a Japanese flier flew "unwittingly" over Panama and took pictures of the canal zone.

What was it that had made the Japanese, or at least a large number of them, suspicious and distrustful of America just before the Pangborn-Herndon incident? The answer is "The American Black Chamber," that colorful book which had been translated into Japanese and had been serially published in two of the largest and most widely read newspapers, the *Tokio Nichi-Nichi* and the *Osaka Mainichi*. The first few chapters were published along with statements obtained from unnamed spokesmen of the foreign office, of the navy and of the army, as well as from some members of the two houses of the Diet, all deploring, some even denouncing, not the book alone, but its author and the government which encouraged his nefarious activities. The book in fact raised, not a mild tempest in a teapot, but a political storm, the end of which is not yet. It may indeed prove the cause, at least a contributing cause, of a Cabinet crisis at Tokio. Surely it will be exploited by the opposition at the expense of the Cabinet at the coming session of the Diet.

You know the book. Its author, Mr. Herbert A. Yardley, was at one time telegraph operator of the State Department and later cryptographer of the War Department. It describes, in a rather boastful tone, the prowling activities of what he calls the "Black Chamber," which he himself organized at the request of the War Department, and which he himself operated for some thirteen years, first at the War Collège at Washington and then in a hiding place in New York City

where he thought he was safe from the watchful eyes of foreign diplomats.

The chapters, three in number, which have created the furore in Japan, are those describing Mr. Yardley's marvelous exploits in connection with the Washington Conference in 1921-1922. They tell us that in about July, 1919, Mr. Yardley's "superiors" "begged me to turn all my efforts to the unraveling of Japanese secrets"; that in six months or so he, with the aid of an ex-missionary to Japan, succeeded in "breaking" the Japanese diplomatic code; that immediately preceding and during the Washington Conference of 1921-1922 he decoded and translated practically all the despatches which passed between the Japanese government and the Japanese embassies at Washington and London, as well as between these two embassies; that these translations were utilized by the American delegation in driving a bargain against the Japanese, and that in recognition of this service he was given a Distinguished Service medal by the War Department, and so on.

In the Japanese newspapers these decoded Japanese messages are referred to as "stolen." Of course, they were not exactly "stolen." It would be more accurate to say, I presume, that the copies of those despatches were obtained from the telegraph and cable companies of which the Japanese embassy at Washington was a patron. Be that as it may, the so-called "stolen" messages showed that the Japanese delegation at the Washington Conference, though vigorously insisting upon a ratio of seven as compared with ten for America in capital ship strength, had all the while been in agreement with their home government that

it is necessary to avoid any clash with Great Britain and America, particularly America, in regard to the armament question.

They showed that

if America presses Japan rigorously, Japan will give up proposal 1 (for ten to seven ratio), then proposal 2 (for ten to six and a half ratio), and that provided the status quo of the Pacific defense is maintained, she will even accept a ten to six naval ratio.

To quote Mr. Yardley further:

With this information in its hands, the American government, if it cared to take advantage of it, could not lose. All it need do was to mark time. Stud poker is not a very difficult game after you see your opponent's hole card.

He was right. Japan did finally accept the ten to six ratio.

But why, you may ask, should this belated disclosure embarrass the Japanese government? If any government were embarrassed by it, it should be the American government. Surely the Wakatsuki Cabinet of 1931 should not be held responsible for the failings, if failings they were, of the Terauchi and the Hara Cabinets of 1919-1922. But it is. The plausible reason is that Baron Shidehara, who now occupies the important portfolio of Foreign Minister, was the ambassador to America in that crucial period preceding and during the Washington Conference, and many accuse him of having been so unsuspecting and so trustful as to fail to change the diplomatic code preparatory to that conference. The opposition, of course, denounces him as stupid, and declares that a man who so ignominiously failed at so important a parley, should not be permitted to occupy the chair of Foreign Minister.

Evidently the Japanese feel more humiliated than angered by the disclosures of the book, for they think they have been made to look like so many simpletons. In the midst of the mingled humiliation and indignation, the Japanese have not stopped to think that in espionage and cryptography Europe is much more "advanced" than America, and that the American Black Chamber was but an imitation of, say, Scotland Yard. I recall an article written in the London *New Statesman* by an Englishman, deploring the unscrupulousness of this British institution. It seems that at the time of the 1922 Lausanne Peace Conference between England and Turkey, Scotland Yard agents established themselves in that Swiss city with the object of spying on the Turkish delegation and of intercepting and decoding the secret official despatches between Ismet Pasha and his home government. Every morning before the opening of the parley Lord Curzon, the chief British delegate, had upon his desk the decoded messages, some of which contained words so uncomplimentary to him that he often entered the conference hall in a fighting mood. The inevitable result, according to the *New Statesman* writer, was the rupture of the conference.

After this amazing revelation one is inclined to lend ear to any story about the far-flung ramifications of Scotland Yard, and the underhand activities of its agents. Is it unreasonable to suspect that the Japanese official despatches which were decoded by Mr. Yardley for the benefit of the American government were also decoded by Scotland Yard for the benefit of Downing Street? The Japanese, excited by Mr. Yardley's dis-

closures, seem to think that they were "stolen" only in America. There is no justification for such a conclusion. One may even wonder if, during the 1930 Naval Conference at London, American and Japanese messages were decoded by Scotland Yard.

To Secretary Kellogg, though Mr. Yardley does not name him, belongs the credit of closing the American Black Chamber in 1929. America, having washed her hands of the mediaeval practice, may logically ask other nations to follow suit. The initiative cannot very well be taken by Japan, for no one likes to appear in the light of whining after being "stung." Meanwhile, it is to be hoped that the feeling of distrust engendered by the newspaper exploitation of Mr. Yardley's book is but a passing phenomenon certain to give way before the mutual trust which is fundamentally sound between Japan and America. It is also possible that in time the Japanese will come to look at the book in a new light, for after all it serves a good purpose by sounding a warning for the future. They may even thank Mr. Yardley for writing it and the American government for not suppressing it.

Novitiate

(*Oenothera*)

Hardly a hermit thrush had stirred,
Nor yet from any ghostly bole
In all the garden had been heard
A rumor of the oriole.

Telling the roses one by one,
Grey as a beadsman were the skies.
In ashes sifting from the sun
Were the stray ruins of butterflies.

And with a rosy sisterhood
Of blossoms dreaming in the dawn,
Demurely nodded one that stood
Behind a dewy curtain drawn.

Daydreams she dreamt and never gazed
Beyond the curtain, it is told,
Until the twilight came and raised
A wondering little face of gold.

Who knows? Was beauty in disgrace,
Thrilling the garden with a smile,
Shy as a flower-saint fain to face
The darkness for a little while?

Fleeing perhaps a nunnery
Of roses very softly furled,
Confessing a desire to be
A novice of the garden world?

And strangely though the seasons pass,
To know the clemency of pain,
The tribulation of the grass,
The tender mercy of the rain?

WILLIAM GRIFFITH.

AS WINTER APPROACHES

By JOHN O'GRADY

EVEN our most conservative leaders recognize that next winter is going to bring serious suffering to our five to seven million unemployed. Except in the New England woolen industry, there is little sign of industrial improvement. In many cities calls for relief have increased steadily during the summer months. Owing to depleted treasuries, relief figures have fallen off. All the relief agencies are doing their best, but they are handicapped by limited funds. They are giving each needy person a little to tide him over his worst days. In times past, the writer used to join in the chorus of criticism of those untrained volunteers who did not give sufficient relief. Those were the happy days of the age of prosperity. After what he has seen in about a hundred cities during the past year, he sometimes wonders whether there is any such thing as sufficient relief. Relief funds may mount high as the skies, and yet relief needs will not be met adequately. Relief prevents suffering, it never remedies poverty.

About the only way to meet the present situation is to try as far as possible to prevent suffering. There has been much talk about public work during the past year, and in the speeches of political leaders are statements regarding the great increase in the volume of public work, but it does not seem to have helped the situation very materially. Public work, after all, is only one industry, and the stimulation of one industry cannot relieve the entire unemployment situation.

As the winter approaches, everything possible is being done to organize the relief resources of the nation. The Association of Community Chests and Councils in coöperation with the President's Emergency Committee on Employment is endeavoring to coördinate and develop the relief resources of all cities of 25,000 or more inhabitants. Last winter the Chests raised about ninety million dollars. Their executives recognize that it will be exceedingly difficult to duplicate the feat this winter. Incomes have been cut, savings have been exhausted. The very factors that make for increased relief limit the ability to give. There is bound to be a further falling off in the small givers from last winter. It is only by increasing the large gifts that relief appeals can expect to reach their goals these coming months.

Approximately 72 percent of the relief during the past year came from public funds. The chances are that the proportion will be increased during the next winter. At present a concerted effort is being made all over the country to get the cities and counties to assume full responsibility for the relief of the unemployed. The degree to which public agencies have assumed responsibility for relief varies greatly in different communities. The two extremes are Detroit and Denver,

in which more than 90 percent of the relief comes from public funds, and Baltimore and New Orleans in which there is no public relief.

Catholics should be very much concerned about their contributions in this emergency. It is in periods of great stress that Catholic Charities has always made its most brilliant contributions. Reviewing the situation in the United States one finds that in fifty-nine of the ninety-three cities in the United States with a population of 100,000 or more, the Church has some kind of organized relief program, either in the form of a city-wide organization of Catholic Charities, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul or an organization of Catholic women. In ten of these cities the relief work is in charge of volunteers. In forty-nine cities there is a combination of volunteer and professional service. In eighteen of the 203 cities with a population of 25,000 to 100,000 there is an organized Catholic relief program. If the writer had been able to search more carefully, he might have been able to find the semblance of a Catholic relief organization in ten additional cities in the 25,000 to 100,000 group.

One should not overlook the fact that many parish churches are giving a great amount of relief. The writer recently visited a mining town in which the pastor was the general relief agent for persons of all races and creeds. Many parishes, too, have their own relief societies of which we have no record. Another fact to be kept in mind is the relatively small Catholic population in a number of cities. Catholics in these cities usually do not have many poor among them. Making due allowance for all these circumstances, it is still true that there is no organized Catholic Charities in many cities in which such a program is most necessary. Catholic life has always found its highest, completest expression in charity. Where charity does not flourish neither can Catholic life abound. What then of the Catholic life of the cities in which Catholic men and women have no opportunity for participation in Catholic Charities?

With the development of large public and private organizations during the past ten years, Catholics in many cities have been inclined to absolve themselves from further responsibility. "Let the city attend to it." "It is the work of the Chest." These are the excuses heard most frequently. "Before the coming of the Community Chest we had an active St. Vincent de Paul Society in this city but now there is no longer any need for it." This is the story one hears up and down the land. In many cities in which large programs of Catholic Charities have developed, there has been a marked decline in lay activities. "People with new ideas, well-trained people, could do the work so much better." The priests and the people took them at

their word and turned over the entire responsibility to them. How much better would it have been if all Catholic dioceses had been able to fuse the new with the old, as four dioceses have done so successfully. In these four dioceses the best Catholic traditions have been maintained; lay organizations have been given a new life, new leadership and a new inspiration. New avenues of endeavor have been opened up. The work of these dioceses has included everything necessary for a good program.

Without a Charities program in every parish the Church is failing to give the laity an opportunity for participating in service under its leadership. It is failing to give its people an opportunity of carrying out many of the principles that are preached to them from the pulpit. A Catholic charitable organization provides the most practical basis of a program of lay Catholic social action in America. It is only by actual contact with the problems of poverty, ill-health, poor housing, delinquency, etc., that Catholic men and women can get a real understanding of the social problems of the country. In Europe Catholic social action

grew out of the labor movement. In the United States it must grow out of Charities.

The standards of Catholic charitable organizations will be the measure of Catholic influence on community-wide social movements in the United States. It is rather interesting to note the influence of a few well-organized Catholic agencies during the past ten years on social thought in this country. In many places, however, Catholics still adopt a purely defensive attitude toward general social movements.

Catholic social work needs trained leadership. It needs a leadership that is capable of indoctrinating the laity with the principles and practices of Christian charity. The diocese should provide this trained leadership and in every parish there should be lay action. Diocesan leadership can bring guidance and inspiration to the parish. It can aid the parishes in developing the apostolate of the laity in Christian charity. Is not the time ripe for a larger lay apostolate in this field? Such an apostolate will minister not only to the needs of the body but also to those of the soul. Catholic life as a whole will be the better for its ministrations.

GLORIFYING THE CRIMINAL: II

By MORROW MAYO

I DO NOT say that crime news should not be printed. Quite the contrary. I say that it should not be printed enthusiastically. I say, moreover, that it should be handled in the light of public welfare and mass psychology. The newspaper man should not be an irresponsible purveyor of dynamite. The newspaper man who prides himself (as many of them do) on the fact that he is not first a responsible citizen, but first a newspaper man, determined to print everything he can learn without regard for public welfare—such a man is consecrated to an insane purpose. He is a menace to society, almost a lunatic at large.

Here is an example of what I mean. Ten years ago there was a race riot in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The Negro section of the town was burned to ashes, forty men and women were murdered, and several hundred were wounded. Within a few hours the entire state was charged like an electric wire. That night, in Oklahoma City, a short time before the morning paper, the *Daily Oklahoman*, went to press with its final edition, a Negro and a white man got into a drunken fight which resulted in the Negro killing the white man. Walter Morrow, the night editor (who by the way is not related to me), took the story, read it carefully, cut it down to a paragraph and buried it in the inside pages. That story, "blown up," or even printed with its usual prominence under ordinary conditions, would have caused a race riot in Oklahoma City. He minimized a cheap murder and probably prevented a massacre.

Some time ago when a prominent banker committed suicide in New York, several citizens, including the

coroner and former Governor Alfred E. Smith, withheld the news for a day. I do not condone that; neither, however, do I condemn it. I condemn the situation which gives such a procedure at least some justification. With the financial nervousness which existed in New York at that time, with one bank failing and others preparing to topple, if this news had been blurted out in a quick edition under screaming headlines, "Bank President Commits Suicide," it might very probably have started a run on that bank. And the men who withheld this news felt, I suspect, that if the news were given to all the papers at once with an appeal to withhold it in the interest of public welfare until they could look into the banker's affairs and prepare for whatever might follow, that one and perhaps all of the papers would have "broken" the story wide open. It is worth noting, moreover, that nothing much was said about this heinous offense, suppression of news—the worst of all crimes in the eyes of the press. The papers, despite their wrath, evidently could not bring themselves to attack such an obvious act of sound public policy. But doubtless any man with less of a reputation for straightforward honesty and common sense than Mr. Smith would have been, to use newspaper slang, "crucified" by the newspapers for what he did.

To say "news suppression" to a newspaper is to wave a red flag in a bull's face. There is, however, a great deal of hypocrisy in the press's righteous indignation on the subject. The newspapers of the country suppress plenty of news themselves—news which is contrary to their own policies. They suppress news which does not

suit them, and they publish publicity which is not news. Every newspaper man is familiar with those two orders: "B. O. Must" and "B. O. Kill." They mean: "From the business office; must be printed," and "From the business office; must not be printed." The business office has a great deal to say about what appears, both in editorial and news columns. The magazine, *New Yorker*, which keeps a watchful eye on the New York press, recently had this to say concerning editorial comment on the Pope's encyclical, a subject for editorial comment, if there ever was one:

The *Times* was the only paper in New York which had the courage to mention the matter on its editorial page, and the *Times* could hardly be said to have expressed an opinion, devoting most of its space to a general statement on both sides, interspersed liberally with Latin quotations. The general idea of the *Times* editorial seemed to be that we must reserve decision until the next century. However, the *Times* did mention the matter, which was something. . . . All in all, a rather craven exhibition. Our press is free, it is true, and bends the knee to no one, but there is evidently such a thing as being foolhardy when it comes to offending the circulation department.

The news services absolutely do not suppress any news. But local papers do. When news from a distant place does not appear in your local paper, it is the paper itself which has suppressed it, for the papers are under no obligation to the press services to print the dispatches which they buy. Up until a few years ago the newspapers distorted so many telegraph stories, by deleting paragraphs or rewriting them, that the press services passed a rule forbidding their member papers to change a word, or to leave out a word of any telegraph story if the deletion alters the complete sense of the story in the slightest degree. So now, if a Southern paper objects to printing a Negro lynching story which indicates in the body of the story that the Negro was innocent, or some other paper objects to printing a Red menace story which shows a Communist in a favorable light, they face the often unpleasant necessity of either printing the whole truth or none of it. Newspapers still violate this rule, but it is a stern and fine contribution to American journalism in the interest of ethics, honesty and common decency.

If the newspapers are actually so upset about crime in general, then why was it that the *Chicago Tribune* did not declare its war on gangsters until one of its own employees was killed? One might well ask if all the other papers in the United States are waiting until the same thing happens to one of their employees before they start out with fire in their eyes to stamp out crime. Why don't they start when somebody else's employee, say a clerk in a grocery store, is murdered?

Manifestly, nothing much is to be expected from a study of surface effects. If there is to be any remedy, we must get to the source of the matter—to the newspaper man himself. The fundamental fact is that newspaper men simply do not look upon crime as other classes of responsible citizens look upon it. The

journalist's attitude toward crime, from the very nature of his trade, is primarily one of curiosity. Crimes do not impress him as outrages against society. They interest him as entertaining, amusing phenomena. He enjoys them. Writing in the *Forum* magazine recently, Walter Lippmann, former editor of the *New York World*, has this to say:

Arnold Rothstein was murdered in a hotel which is a ten-minute walk from my home; Jack Diamond was shot in a hotel which is not much farther away. But for the fact that I am a newspaper man and know reporters who were at the scene shortly after the shootings, I should not, I think, have any greater conviction of their reality than I have about a murder in a novel by Edgar Wallace.

If Mr. Lippmann ran a store (say one of the delicatessen stores on Sixth Avenue, which keep their doors locked every night for fear of hold-ups, refusing to admit suspicious-looking customers), or if he were a banker sitting at home reading his evening paper, I think that he would have a much greater conviction of the reality of those shootings than he had as a newspaper man. He continues:

The detectives were a little less smart than they are in the books, and of course there was no solution. But I cannot recall that my primary emotion was one of indignation that defiant crimes had been committed in the city where I live. As far as I could observe my friends and myself, it seems that we enjoyed that Rothstein and Diamond affairs. For we city dwellers are connoisseurs of celebrated crimes, and here were two specimens which after examination turned out to be pretty good, but not quite up to the level of the Snyder, Elwell, and Hall-Mills cases.

Like every other newspaper man in New York, from greenest sub to highest editor, Mr. Lippmann "enjoyed" the Rothstein murder and the Diamond shooting; he speaks of those two crimes as "two specimens" which were "pretty good" but "not quite up the level" of three murders which the newspapers played up even more. To newspaper men all murders are "pretty good"—or else they are "fair" or "lousy" or "swell." A newspaper man's favorite murder is the traditional "ax murder" (city editors cry for it) but he can make out pretty well on plain pistol shootings. Mr. Lippmann adds:

I have little doubt that the shooting of Diamond amused New York for a few days and shocked it very little. This was due partially to the feeling that Diamond's life was not precious, but chiefly it was due to the fact that the shooting did not seem actually to have happened. Thus we must be acquitted of mere callous cruelty, however much we are damned for lack of imagination. It has never been accounted vicious to enjoy the murders in the Rue Morgue, and the same sort of innocence pervades New York's enjoyment of its big murder cases. For our civilization has become so extensive and complex that we are for the most part mere spectators of events in which by a hidden chain of causes we are implicated.

The shooting of Diamond did not amuse the people of New York. What amused them, if anything, was

not the crime, but the newspaper stories. But the shooting certainly amused the newspapers and the newspaper men, for Mr. Lippmann has just said so. I also disagree with this distinguished newspaper man in his belief that "the shooting did not seem actually to have happened." Not to the newspaper men perhaps, but I am satisfied that the readers of the New York papers were quite sure that Jack Diamond had actually been shot. Stirred by the press, thousands of them actually stormed the hospital.

When Mr. Lippmann says that "we are for the most part spectators of events," I feel that he is speaking not quite so much from the viewpoint of the average citizen as from the specialized viewpoint of the journalist. Thus the newspaper man cannot be condemned for callousness, but I think it is inescapable that his trade inures him to the horror of crime, and that Mr. Lippmann offers ample testimony to the fact that newspaper men are so satiated with the spectacle of crime that it takes a most horrifying murder to draw from them any comment more flattering than "pretty good." If the city dweller is a connoisseur of crime, (which I do not believe) it is not because of the crimes, but because the crimes are written up so vividly and juicily. For city murders, per se, are no "better" than country murders. There have been several country murder cases in the United States within the last few years which "outshine" anything New York has ever had to offer. The Northcott case, for example. The Judd Gray-Ruth Snyder case was not important, and not very extraordinary; it just seemed that way to a naive, wiseacre, crime-hungry New York press. If it had happened in Keokuk, Iowa, it would not have been so celebrated. A murder just like it is happening somewhere in the United States every week or so.

I quote Mr. Lippmann simply to bring out clearly and forcibly the contrast between his viewpoint which, I judge, may be taken to represent the most enlightened newspaper opinion and that of the man who is at the head of all the police of New York City. In two comprehensive articles on crime and the underworld, and the factors responsible for it, Mr. Lippmann does not suggest that the press has the slightest responsibility for so much crime. On the other hand Police Commissioner Mulrooney says that the press has a great deal of responsibility in the matter. And so do I.

I do not indict the newspapers for publishing crime news. I indict them for treating it casually and callously, and at the same time enthusiastically; for working it up; for treating criminals as glamorous individuals; for serving crime to the public as one serves an ice cream soda. The time has long ago passed when the newspapers can evade their responsibility by the specious plea that "we print what the people want to read." That is a hollow, cowardly, false defense which no longer impresses any intelligent person. When newspapers feed the appetites of morons and easily swayed youths and vicious minds, they are in the position of a bartender who sells a man too much liquor,

and bad liquor at that. We cannot, perhaps, expect social responsibility from a bartender, but the people have a right to expect it from their press.

I repeat therefore that the playing up of crime news encourages crime, that the American press as a whole glorifies and publicizes the American criminal, and that crime news plays a part in the daily press out of all proportion to its news value. The problem is deep-seated. The whole theory of news is distorted; news is not evaluated on a sane rational basis. The minds of the newspaper men, who arbitrarily evaluate news, are irrational and astigmatic, especially on the subject of crime. It is not enough to say that crime is treated in America in accordance with the American theory of news. That theory, indeed, is what I here attack. It is time for the press to examine both its theory and its practice, frankly, courageously and without prejudice.

In the meantime, I question the competence of the American press to treat, print and evaluate news on a pro-social, fundamentally rational basis. Not on a basis of circulation, not on a basis of appeal to vicious, salacious and moronic minds, not on a basis of entertainment, but on a basis of sense, a basis of social ethics, if you please. For if the manner in which news is presented to the public is not to be determined upon a basis of social responsibility, what other defensible basis is it to be determined upon? Mr. Lippmann says that the American people "cannot much longer defy the devil with a wooden sword." Certainly not with the American press pumping stimulants into the devil.

FIGHTING IN RUSSIA

By LEONID I. STRAKHOVSKY

WHEN on June 18, 1918, the train reached Romanov-on-Murman, commonly known as Murmansk, and a mid-night sun illuminated before my eyes the desolate shores of the deep, narrow bay, the wooden structures of the port, the yellow sand hills and a handful of war-time barracks and sheds, a new page of my adventurous book of life was opened. But I could hardly foresee then what remained still in store for me. I left behind me the Red capital of Russia, the dark structure of the Kresty prison building, where I had been incarcerated, and memories one more sad and desolate than the other.

During the long train journey with a two days' break at Petrozavodsk, I had noticed that British and French officers and men were instructing the Red railway guards, teaching them the use of machine-guns and general methods of warfare. I was surprised by this, but I found out soon the reason for it. German troops had invaded Finland and the Allied governments were very much concerned with keeping open the route from Murmansk to Petrograd, the only all-year-round way of communication with their former ally. Besides, all Allied missions were still in Russia and it was necessary to maintain their way out of Russia free from possible seizure by the Germans. However, not so long afterward these same Red guards proved to have been good pupils, when they began the fight against the Allied intervention.

In Murmansk I joined a group of patriotic Russians who were preparing the overthrow of the local Soviet with the intention of keeping the Murman region separated from the

rest of Russia under the protection of the Allied forces. These men, headed by Lieutenant-Commander George Vesselago and General Nicholas Zvegintsev, had on their hands one of the hardest tasks. Because they were few in number, had no armed force and could not obtain any effective support from the senior Allied officer, Major-General F. C. Poole of the British army, they had to use diplomacy and strategic combinations with the local Bolsheviks. At the same time the refusal of General Poole to give us a hand on the ground that if he did so it would mean intervention in the internal affairs of Russia, was just an excuse. The real reason lay in the fact that the two Russian battleships *Ascold* and *Chesma*, manned by a Bolshevik crew, could have easily destroyed by their twelve-inch guns the Allied ships, namely, the British cruiser *Glory*, the French cruiser *Amiral Aube* and the American cruiser *Olympia*, if the Allies had given support to our group.

However, we managed to overcome the difficulties, which is a story in itself, and relying on the moderate groups of the local Soviet we had prepared and signed a treaty or agreement with the representatives of France, Great Britain and the United States, after having brought about an open rupture with the Bolshevik government, then in Moscow. This agreement signed in the name of the Murmansk Soviet of Soldiers', Workers' and Peasants' Representatives on July 6 and ratified by the Soviet on July 7, 1918, is, to my knowledge, the only document of its kind signed by an American representative, in this case, by Captain Bearer, commanding officer of the cruiser *Olympia*. By the terms of this document the three countries promised us their support by way of supplies and armed assistance.

A few days later this agreement was given a test. At four o'clock on the morning of July 12, two hand-grenades were thrown into the bedroom of Lieutenant-Commander Vesselago, luckily enough wounding him only slightly. It was the work of the Bolshevik sailors from the battleship *Ascold*. We appealed to General Poole for protection, but he started long and dreary pourparlers. Then in despair we asked for help from Captain Bearer. And we got it. Never will I forget the sigh of relief when we saw the marching units of American blue-jackets taking in hand the troubled situation. These boys (perhaps as well as their commanding officer) did not understand anything in our political struggle, but they did their duty, because their government had pledged its word and kept it. As the result of their support, the *Ascold* was disarmed and its Red crew entrained and sent south to join their fellow Communists in Red Russia. Murmansk once more was safe for democracy.

This Murmansk venture was somewhat of a prelude to the disastrous Archangel campaign, during which I came once more into contact with Americans and experienced their loyalty, this time under different circumstances. There exists much argument about the campaign in north Russia. Some writers tinted with radicalism seem to think that there was no reason whatsoever to start it, and affirm even that the enormous supplies stored in Archangel had been looted by the Bolsheviks even before the Allies and Americans landed there on August 3, 1918, with an obvious intention to prevent their shipment over to Germany. However, it is not my intention here to start an argument and my aim is only to give two pictures of our collaboration with Americans in the gloomy days of the civil war in Russia.

It was in November, 1918, that my company, the First Company of the French Foreign Legion (formed in north Russia) under the command of Captain R. Piéton, and known as *Coureurs du Bois*, was ordered to leave its base at Malyie

Ozerki near the railway station Obozerskaya and to proceed about a hundred miles east to Seletskoye on the Archangel-Petrograd road. When we came there we were told that our mission would be to participate in the attack on Kodysh, about thirty miles south of Seletskoye. Our part of the attack had to be a movement through the forest into the rear of the Bolshevik position, directed especially against the Bolshevik battery of three-inch field guns. A flank movement should be executed at the same time by a company of Royal Marine Light Infantry, while a front attack was to be led by Companies K and L of the 339th Infantry under the command of Major Donaghue, known as "Fighting Mike."

We had received a Canadian equipment: snow-shoes, toboggans, on which machine-guns, rifles, ammunition, tents, sleeping-bags and one week's rations were loaded and fastened. We had also received white smocks to make us invisible against the snow. But our men, most of whom had fought in the World War and many of whom were officers in the Russian army, were not used to snow-shoes, and their progress through the forest was slow. Besides, none of us knew well enough this part of the country and we had to rely on a very imperfect map and a compass. Mind you, all this for a march through the night. It happened, therefore, that we reached the Bolshevik position two hours later than we were supposed to. We attacked the battery and took it. But very soon, taken under heavy fire from two sides, we had to retire. Meanwhile, Major Donaghue had attacked the Bolshevik position at the given hour, i.e., two hours before we attacked, but was pushed back. At the same time the company of the R. M. L. I. was lost in the forest and never reached its goal. Thus this careful attack prepared by Colonel Lucas, the French commander of the railway front, and Lieutenant-Colonel White, of the British army, commanding the sector of Seletskoye, was a successful washout, because these gentlemen applied methods of a regular war, while the conditions in north Russia were quite different, and because they omitted the question of liaison without which a simultaneous action was quite impossible in the conditions then prevailing.

But that very night, after we had returned to the little group of log block-houses occupied by Major Donaghue's men, the Bolsheviks started a counter-attack. And here I was a witness of the extraordinary bravery of Major Donaghue, who forgot even his duties as a commander and rushed from his headquarters into the night, into the fight. Then a curious incident happened. No one of my company spoke English and while our men were occupying some posts in the line of defense, no one of Major Donaghue's signal men could speak Russian. Thus for a few minutes, while "Fighting Mike" forgot his commander's duties and joined his men, I took his place and in his name gave orders over the telephone to the men of the French Foreign Legion. During this time Captain R. Piéton was nowhere to be found.

In June, 1919, I waved good-bye to Major Donaghue. I was leaving Archangel for Murmansk on a British transport. The ship steamed slowly down the mighty Dvina. On her way she passed close to other ships. On their decks stood the Americans who had spent a severe Arctic campaign without knowing what it all was for. They waved to us. We waved back. Their eyes were full of visions of home. So were ours. But they knew that they were going home now that the fighting was over. As for us, we know that we had to fight still more and more to reach our home. Then I saw Major Donaghue. "Good-bye, major," I called. And back came: "Good-bye! Hope to see you soon—at home."

NEW ZEALAND SONG-ECHOES

By PAUL KAVANAGH

JUST recently, the literary critics of the lands of the Southern Cross hailed with appreciative unanimity a small and locally published collection of poems by Miss Eileen Duggan, called "Bird Songs of New Zealand." Though this slender volume contains only twenty-three poems in all, each in similar genre, it gives a worthy indication of their maker's gift of true artistic expression. With remarkable facility she has attuned her music to the varied notes of the feathered songsters of the New Zealand bush.

Though Miss Duggan elsewhere writes with wistfulness of her country's remoteness on the far edge of the world—

"We are the wheat self-sown
Beyond the rim of the paddock;
Banned by the wind from the furrows,
Lonely of root and head."

—it is to her native land and her ancestry that her poetic qualities may be credited. Of Irish descent, she was born and has lived her life amid the natural loveliness of Maoriland. Her Catholic faith has spiritualized the qualities acquired from Irish heredity and New Zealand environment. Distinctive personality marks everything she has written. Moreover, she has all the attributes of a true artist: with her, seeing, hearing and understanding are one. "The First Night," from "Bird Songs of New Zealand," provides an illustration:

"In the deep December night,
When each sandaled wind was still,
To the listening ear of earth
Spoke the bell-bird from the hill:

'O my bubbling peal of bells,
O my little melody,
Let me chime Your coming in,
Let me bless You from a tree!'

Said the hihi, glowing gold:
'With my stitch that comes and goes,
O my naked little Christ,
Let me stitch Your bits of clothes!'

Said the bittern booming deep:
'Little Soldier, in that night
When the spears shall crowd You thick,
Let me drum Your foes to flight!'

And the tern, with sailor wing:
'Little Salt, Who'll chose to be
Friend of all poor fishermen,
Take a blessing from the sea.'

Sang the tui—God, how clear—
'Little Love, oh, come away!
Come into the bush tonight;
We shall love You more than they.'

So into the quiet dripped
The great tender, fluting words,
And a cross of stars burned blue
At the blessing of the birds."

This deeply sensitive poem recalls the saying attributed to Saint Basil: "Ubi aves, ibi angeli."

In her brief "Foreword" to her book of verse Miss Duggan says: "These do not pretend to be literature. They are simply rhymes on their birds for the children of our country." And with a subtle witchery of words she takes from the distinctive notes of birds so different as the tui, the godwit, the huia, the shining cuckoo and the bell-bird, the very tunes with which she describes them individually. Listen to the echoes of the elusive "Shining Cuckoo or Pipiwharau," a name suggested by its haunting musical notes:

"I remember once in Para how I heard your mother calling,
Calling 'Pipi-wha-rau-roa' from a poplar by the river,
Crying slowly the one word.
And I burnt my eyes with gazing. Still I see the poplars shiver,
Still I hear the little runnels down the folded gulley falling,
But I never saw the bird!"

Of the bell-bird, Captain James Cook, the great navigator who first charted the New Zealand coast, wrote in his "Journal": "The number was incredible, and they seemed to strain their throats in emulation of each other. This wild melody was infinitely superior to any we have ever heard of the same kind. It seemed like small bells most exquisitely tuned." Miss Duggan recalls its very notes in the refrain of her verses:

"He heard again the bell-bird sing,
So slow, so strong! So slow, so strong!
Could ear alive forget that stroke?
So sweet, so long! So sweet, so long!"

Large colonies of web-footed gannets are to be seen at certain points on the New Zealand coast-line. Their gathered thousands, either at rest on the waves or closely dotted over a wide expanse of the nearby shore, are a familiar sight to Miss Duggan, who writes:

"Oh, I have seen you lying on the waters,
All I could see was white herds, and white herds,
A sea of sleepy gannets—or a sea of lilies?
Shining and shaking—a meadow of birds."

The honey-eating tui is the sweetest singer of the New Zealand bush, with his wide range of notes and varying melodic themes of gladsome and untiring song. In the poem which includes the verse quoted below, Miss Duggan interrogates a young New Zealander:

"Would you, remembering, tell them of the tui?
Wild, wild and blinding is his lightest note.
They—they never heard him, swinging on a flax-flower,
Mad with the honey and the noon in his throat."

There is no repetition of style or form in Miss Duggan's work, but an elusive charm permeates her unstudied linking of sense with sound. Following are a few characteristic lines. The wood-pigeon: "O leaf-burnt bird of autumn." "They call the cows along the tinkling twilight." The kingfisher passes by: "A falling, a flashing of blue and of silver." The tiny silver-eye:

"You fly as if you bore the freight of summer,
As if you dripped from little wing and shoulder
A spilth of blossom."

And an old Maori tells of the beautifully tinted but nearly extinct hihi:

"'You will seldom see it now,' said Topine Te Mamaku,
With a sigh.
'It has dipped its little wings in the stain of the sky,
And its down is cloth of gold,' said Topine Te Mamaku."

The native cuckoo of her homeland recalls to Miss Duggan's Catholic vision of things unseen, the old legend of the cuckoo:

"Young Christ went groaning up to Quarantana,
With His tall head flung up against the sky.
Spring cried to Him from every bush and bramble.
He passed her blindly by.

Oh, every tree was given up to blossom,
And every bee burred in the broken lane,
But as He passed, the little bees and blossoms
Were still with love and pain.

And every bird bent sideways in its sorrow,
And whispered softly to Him as He went,
'My brightness, are You black and lost in anguish,
My sweetness, are You spent?'

Yea, every bird except the careless cuckoo,
That, working on, in flurry and in fret,
Hollowed a nest, and cried its own name over,
Nor saw His eyes were wet.

Young Christ came smiling down from Quarantana,
He blessed each bird along the broken lane,
And said, 'My little pity, it is over,
My gladness, sing again.'

And then He turned and looked upon the cuckoo.
It gave one cry and flew off to the west.
Since then it may not cease its haunted flying,
Nor ever build a nest."

"The Legend of the Cuckoo," like "The First Night," strikes chords that vibrate repeatedly through the soul's deepest silences. Miss Duggan's keen eye views nature with great discernment and marked artistry, and seeing beyond nature's manifestations bends adoringly before nature's God. In the song of birds and in the loveliness of trees, the mystery of Creation is revealed.

Mariner

Some seamen build a quiet house
By fields of drowsy clover,
Where sunshine-sated bees carouse,
And call their voyaging over,

A garden plot, to them as wide
As all the ocean, blotting
The memory of turning tide
And long-furled canvas rotting.

But I go on, though nights be pale
With rain and winds be wailing—
There are so many seas to sail,
So little time for sailing.

JOHN HANLON.

COMMUNICATIONS

AN INDICTMENT

St. Louis, Mo.

TO the Editor: It is with no hatred of the Church, but with a desire for a better understanding between churchmen, that I undertake to call your attention to some matters which are to affect the credit of the Mother Church in a day swiftly advancing. Indeed my main interest is the credit of the Mother Church; for it I would speak.

The anti-prohibitionists have not the official sanction of the Catholic Church and will not get it; but the offense of the Church for which it (she) may expect to be held strictly to account is more serious. A Catholic editor has written thus: "Our Catholic editors, with very few exceptions, have spoken and written as if antagonism to the Eighteenth Amendment were a well-understood and acceptable position for Catholics to assume." The communication from which the above quotation is taken has a half-dozen propositions that are of similar import.

The facts behind that statement lay a foundation for indictment against the Church more serious than mere sanction of nullification and defeatism, official or unofficial; the wrong that has been done is to the mind of Roman Catholicism; the wrong is in a régime that has so benumbed the spiritual faculty in the Catholic mind that it is without protest against the iniquity and outrage of commercialized alcoholism, and looks upon the struggle against it not only without sympathy but pursues it with malignity and sometimes with mendacity. The blindness of this line of conduct is the more depressing from the fact that the Church herself has been more hampered by this enemy of mankind than by any other enemy, secret or open. How, under these conditions, is there going to be respect for Catholic judgment? How is respect to be won for Catholic pretensions?

The fact is, Catholic opinion is priestly opinion; none other is tolerated. The priestly mind when free is good as any other mind. Its misfortune is that it is obsessed with a delusion of grandeur—grandeur of an institution which has no existence except as a churchman's ideal. Mr. Belloc is a victim of that obsession. The folly of this course is exhibited in the fact that Catholics do not fall for it after a healthy moral sense awakens in Catholic brains and bosoms. I venture to assert that there are more baptized Catholics in the Masons in the United States than in the Knights of Columbus; my warrant for this statement is the large number of baptized Catholics I have found in the Protestant churches I have served in twenty-one years. Such have to be sought out; they do not advertise themselves. I have known no better people than Kathleen Norris, Colonel Callahan, Denis A. McCarthy; I have known few as good; their Catholic loyalty keeps them in the Church that offends their moral sense and offers them no home. Such are relatively rare among the Catholics who are done with that priestly illusion and dismiss it and forget it, putting it behind and away from them.

I am wrong. This pernicious policy is not chargeable to the priesthood; but to the priests carefully culled to administer the Church, as the fruit of a Bourbon, an Ultramontane policy, too successful for her good. The deliverance of the Church will come with the enfranchisement of its lay minds. The enormous superiority of the Christian churches here in the United States whose policy has won the sanction of the lay mind has not only outrun the Mother Church but has lifted the whole citizenry of the republic to a moral plane so much higher than that of the

clergy (the vocal part of it) and the press, of Catholicism, that there has been a literature of Catholic protest against the discredit falling upon the Church. The future of any church lies in winning the approval and support of the lay mind. There is a cynic sneer for anyone who says the voice of the people is the voice of God; if not from a free and enlightened people, we may be sure it is not from the coterie who have the privilege of uttering the maledictions of obscurantist, of deluded, rulers of a belated, outdated, absolutism.

This is Catholic thinking, but Catholics have to get outside the Church to say or think it. I say it with sorrow for I do not hate the Church.

JOHN MCCARTHY,
Pastor, Bridgeton Methodist Church.

We are publishing Pastor McCarthy's letter because one use THE COMMONWEAL can serve is to voice just such "outside opinions" and to meet them frankly. Now there is a sense in which he is undoubtedly right; and another sense in which he is indubitably wrong. That American Catholic opinion, essentially urban, has allowed its disapproval of prohibition to go too far and to become virtual indifference to, if not actual abetting of, unlawful traffic in liquor is not our opinion merely but that of several—perhaps many—leading churchmen. On the other hand, the reason why this happens to be true is not at all what our correspondent thinks it is. If he still believes that in such matters the voice of the clergy is authoritative, he is badly mistaken. The trouble with American Catholicism is that its dominant mass psychology is anti-authoritarian and pro-clique. If there are as many quondam Catholics among Masons as our correspondent estimates—a matter which we permit ourselves to doubt with some energy—the reasons why are probably these: lack of appreciation of the true nature of authority, and a resultant collapse into individualism; taking offense at the pro-cliquishness of some clergymen and some groups; plain, old-fashioned sin, in the form of sex and money. Should our reverend friend ever take to hearing confessions—as even Catholic laymen sometimes hear them, from people going back to the real thing—our guess is that he will agree with us.—The Editors.

AFTER FORTY YEARS

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor: Mr. Robert Morrison MacIver, Lieber Professor of Political Philosophy and Sociology at Barnard College, has an interesting, but on the whole unsympathetic, interpretation of the labor encyclical of Pope Pius XI in *Current History*. The claims therein are characterized as excessive, in the light of the "establishment, first in non-Catholic countries" of the principle of legislative protection of the worker "long before the encyclical of Leo XIII . . . beginning in England and finding its fullest nineteenth-century development in the legislation of Australia and New Zealand."

Professor MacIver is assuming that the whole course of the "awakening of social conscience" from the thirties of the nineteenth century on, lies clear and orderly in the minds of every intelligent person, but I think if he does assume that, his claims are also excessive. I find very few orderly minds on that subject.

I have a distinct impression, which if false I should like to have corrected, that this modern "awakening of social conscience" took place mainly under revolutionary pressure and not at first from any sense of duty in government; that modern social legislation has been in the main, in its earlier stages, palliative concession in the face of rising revolutionary Socialism or

anarchy, and was made necessary by a long weakening of Christian conscience.

I should like very much to see the genesis of the two encyclicals brought into line, by some competent hand, with the genesis of state protection of the worker. I should like to see traced, if that is possible, the development of true "conscience" in the matter whether as a result of papal activity or entirely separate from it, or as something preëxisting but temporarily eclipsed, whichever is true.

Professor MacIver seems to look upon the Pope's circular letter as the product of some elderly and rather unpractical clergyman who might be better employed in botanizing or collecting butterflies, and one wonders, rather irrelevantly, if Mussolini would agree with him.

To Catholics, however, it seems wholly possible that religion can influence conscience, and that conscience can influence every act in life, down to the most insignificant and including the most material. It seems to Catholics (not at all to exclude a great many other people) that conscience can, and ought, to affect government since government is carried on today by legislation, and legislation (theoretically, at least) is the product of the thought of groups of individual men.

It seems also, to Catholics, to be quite immaterial if true, that others than Catholics, or others than any particular person who happens to be the Head of the Church at the moment, should have thought "first" of some principle of conduct.

The point is that conduct should be regulated by principles, and that principles have a source which any right-minded man can discover.

And it seems to Catholics that if there be any reason whatever in their body of belief, it is obviously the Pope's place to speak on any subject where principles of moral conduct are concerned—which means, on any subject at all pertinent to human relations.

That is a very different matter from arranging for men, to the last detail, how they shall make their acts conform to conscience in every unpredictable case. It is curious and interesting that so many people who reject the Pope's right and duty to address the world, are nevertheless disappointed when he does not lay down details of conduct, and confines himself to general principles.

What Professor MacIver seemingly fails to see is that wherein he can demonstrate "awakening of social conscience" he may be speaking of that part of Catholic teaching which was never rejected by Protestantism, though perhaps not sufficiently emphasized at various moments of history by some ecclesiastics who did happen to be engaged in catching butterflies at the time.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

FERVIDUS AND TEPIDUS

Calumet, Mich.

TO the Editor: THE COMMONWEAL is to be congratulated and thanked for securing and printing so masterly a character study, so intimate a portrait of the human heart, as Henry Frank's "Fervidus and Tepidus." An essay like this one engenders deep thought and even acts like a searchlight on the dark recesses of conscience. Mr. Frank's language is painfully frank and grim, yet poignantly beautiful and touching. A real masterpiece! It is, moreover, my first meeting with Henry Frank, who has made a taking overture. I trust that we shall be able to continue our acquaintance through the medium of our mutual friend, THE COMMONWEAL.

CHRISTINE GAZVODA.

MULTIFOLD WAR GUILT

Dorchester, Mass.

TO the Editor: Writing of war treaty revision, Mr. Belloc, in *THE COMMONWEAL* of June 10, inquires "What do those who ask revision, want those who won the war to do? Until that question is answered all discussion is futile."

True enough, and after that question is answered all discussion will remain futile, because there is only one revision really needed, and that one is a change of heart. When those who won the war (?) admit their own share of the war guilt; when in their hearts and in their treaties they acknowledge God's overruling sovereignty; when they pray for His guidance, that doing the works of justice, they may obtain the rewards of peace—then discussion might become fruitful.

Failing that, anybody's answer will be little more than a litany of complaint placed in the hand of a graven image.

Possibly Mr. Hoover might have answered to greater effect had he played his cards close to his breast instead of throwing them down on the table. He might have drawn bids from the debtors, in return for a moratorium or a cancellation of the debts, as extreme as some of the following—intentionally extreme because they show small respect for established customs merely because they are established, especially if responsible for existing evils:

(1) Security for France by the thorough undoing of Bismarck's work. This proposal looks to the revival of the German Confederation, but with Prussia and Austria out, yet not left economically crippled.

(2) A progressive demilitarization of Europe. In Poland's case only as and when the Soviet republics keep step.

(3) A progressive denavalization of every naval power. This proposal looks to absolute non-interference with waterborne commerce, with other limitations in sea fighting.

(4) The internationalization of all merchant marine. Ownership and earnings to be on a coöperative plan based on imports and exports.

(5) A right of way to the sea and port privileges for every land-locked nation.

In these proposals there will be found neither Socialism nor pacifism, but only an effort to remove some of the friction troubling the world of politics, and to leave the boards free for some reconstructive work in the economic field.

CHRISTOPHER I. FITZGERALD.

STOCK-TAKING

Minneapolis, Minn.

TO the Editor: I had barely made a beginning in reading the article on "Stock-taking" by William Franklin Sands in *THE COMMONWEAL* of August 26, when I was somewhat startled.

Mr. Sands speaks of a "firm of chartered accountants on one's books." Chartered accountant is a foreign title used in Great Britain and its dominions. There are no chartered accountants legally recognized under the laws of any of the states of this country. Every state in the union has a certified public accountant law, and the certified public accountant performs substantially the same functions as the chartered accountant does in the British Isles.

This may not seem particularly serious to you, but I know that business and professional men do not like this kind of carelessness. Almost any business man, lawyer or banker could have told Mr. Sands what the title of the licensed public accountant and auditor is in this country.

JOSEPH A. BOULAY.

EMIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION LAWS

Somerville, Mass.

TO the Editor: I am like the majority of others, reasonably convinced that the time is opportune for a revision and standardization of the majority of our laws, many of which are obsolete as applying to our present social and civic environment, while more particularly there are many that are not only unreasonable in their application, but inhumanitarian in principle; such, for instance, as those affecting emigration and immigration.

In reading the papers, it is plainly evident that the present arrangement is far from being equitably administered, not because of personalities, or a desire to take an unfair advantage, but rather because our zealous and conscientious personnel are anxious to obey the laws literally and efficaciously. The interpretation of the spirit or the purpose of any law rests to a degree upon the officials who, with either a broad or narrow vision, carry out its precepts as idealists or with fundamental Christian principles, to create a conception in keeping with the intent of the originators of our laws and customs. It is to be hoped, therefore, that our present emigration and immigration laws will be revised, at least to the extent of considering our social and economic standards, prevalent or anticipated.

The above thought is offered suggestively. Our creators of laws are most able, courageous and conscientious, but inadvertently many of the present injustices may have escaped their personal attention. I trust that to arrange more equitably the emigration and immigration laws or their interpretations will be the early efforts of our honored legislative body after convening.

WILLIAM H. BASTION.

SCIENCE AND PRUDENCE

St. Columbans, Nebr.

TO the Editor: Some months ago your columns reflected Catholic indignation aroused by a medical writer's slur on the miracles of Lourdes.

It will interest your readers now to learn that a member of the Lourdes Medical Bureau will shortly visit America on a lecture tour. Dr. John J. A. Sherry, assistant to Dr. Vallet at the bureau, will arrive in New York early in November and will spend some time in the country lecturing on the cures of Lourdes as seen from the scientific viewpoint.

Dr. Sherry is a native of Ireland. He was graduated in medicine at Dublin in 1898. Before taking up permanent residence in Lourdes, he practised extensively in London and served through the war as an army doctor. He has lectured on Lourdes with considerable success in Ireland and England.

Dr. Sherry has witnessed miracles. He has handled the evidence. He has the records. He brings with him forty or fifty slides, including reproductions of X-ray photographs. His coming to the United States presents American Catholics and non-Catholics with a rare opportunity to learn from an authoritative source the marvelous facts of Lourdes.

As he is on duty throughout the summer at the bureau in Lourdes, Dr. Sherry has asked me to act for him in making detailed arrangements for his tour. This I am gladly doing. It will be a pleasure for me to give any of your readers full information regarding the lectures.

REV. E. J. MCCARTHY.

The Commonweal requests its subscribers to communicate any changes of address two weeks in advance, to ensure the receipt of all issues.

THE PLAY AND SCREEN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Friendship

ALTHOUGH George M. Cohan is not precisely a doctor of moral theology, he manages in the space of the three acts of his new play, "Friendship," to relieve himself of a few tornadoes of moral indignation over the consummate self-centeredness and amoral philosophy of the younger generation. His method is to use as his principal character a man who has taken a girl out of the atmosphere of night clubs and made her his mistress, largely with the intention of offering her a chance for self-education. This man, Joe Townsend, learns a few healthy lessons himself during the course of the play, which lead him to see his own actions in a different perspective, and to become, with all the force of sharp experience, the outspoken mentor of a much younger man.

There was some newspaper comment, when the play first opened, to the effect that it was hardly consistent for Townsend to give such wholesale advice to someone else in view of his own past actions. Such comment traces back to the ridiculous notion that everyone remains stationary in their ideas, and that consistency, even in a wrong course, is more to be prized, or at least expected, than the very encouraging inconsistency of changing from loose to sound ideas. I imagine that Mr. Cohan felt his particular message would come with added strength from a man who has discovered his mistakes through experience.

Structurally, the play has many obvious and many tedious spots, but it also contains a number of strikingly good individual scenes. Mr. Cohan has introduced, after the pattern of many French plays, the important confidential friend in the person of Stephen West, a man who shares all Townsend's secrets, helps him out of his difficulties, and furnishes a background of biting though not too cynical comment. Mr. Cohan himself takes the part of Townsend, and has been happy in the selection of Minor Watson to play the part of West. But the outstanding characterization of the whole play is Rudolph Steinert, a delicatessen proprietor, whose son is about to marry the girl whom Townsend has "educated." This son is a rampant young egotist who has told his entire family about the girl's history and her relations with Townsend, and the father, at first anxious to be tolerant, finally lets his deeper instincts get the better of him and administers a sound rebuke to Townsend which has much to do with that man's complete change of perspective. The best parts of the play are the scenes between these two men, and Robert C. Fischer's portrait of Steinert is a memorable and distinguished bit of work. He is Mr. Cohan's other mouthpiece for the hot disgust with prevalent viewpoints which underlies the play as a whole.

I lack overmuch sympathy, in general, with plays that forever paint the younger generation in lurid colors. Perhaps it is the fact that Mr. Cohan shows both generations in much the same light that takes some of the curse off the familiar theme. He is attacking inexperience and selfishness more than any particular generation—the inexperience that thinks itself supremely wise and the selfishness which refuses to submit to the rigors of any sense of moral values. At all events, if he had done nothing more than create the one character of Rudolph Steinert, Mr. Cohan would have achieved something of value in this play. In the end, Townsend marries the girl he has befriended in so thoroughly mistaken a way. The chief weakness of the play lies in the lack of a sufficiently plausible motive for Townsend's not having married the girl before—plausible, that is, in view

of the underlying common sense which Townsend generally exhibits. He himself is the victim of more muddled thinking than seems justifiable in a man of his general caliber. In brief, Townsend is by no means a clearly drawn character, and emerges successfully chiefly due to the personal abilities of Mr. Cohan as an actor. (At the Fulton Theatre.)

Street Scene on the Screen

ONE OF the most interesting studies to be made in the entertainment world today is in the relative success and failure of various efforts to transcribe important stage plays to the talking screen. There have been certain conspicuous achievements—as, for example, "Journey's End." But, either through mistrust of their audiences, or through sheer lack of imagination, the screen adapters often fail to carry across to the new medium the essential feeling of a play that demands more than mere action. This is clearly the case in "Street Scene." The whole value of the play as I recall it with considerable vividness, lay in the last few lines, in which little Rose Maurrant tries to express a sudden illumination that has come to her through tragedy, namely, that environment alone cannot crush us, and that dependence on others cannot save us, but that the force to meet life must be developed from within. In the screen version, although Mr. Rice himself has done the adapting, the most important part of that feeling is left out. The story becomes simply a commonplace account of sordid events in a city tenement, filled, as in the play, with a flood of picturesque detail, but without the sense of spiritual tragedy of the original play.

Obviously, this lack is nothing inherent in the screen. The few lines could have been added without in any way destroying the movement of the last scenes. It does seem to inhere, however, in the viewpoint of screen producers, most of whom were brought up in the traditions of the silent screen which demanded the maximum of physical action and the irreducible minimum of dialogue or captions.

A defect which does seem to belong to screen technique, however, is the difficulty of focusing on revealing detail. There is a small touch of realism, for example, in the last act when the Scandinavian janitor of the tenement fixes his loose rubber heel. The episode is repeated on the screen, but in such a perspective that what instantly caught the amused attention of theatre audiences passes quite unnoticed. The usual resort, in such cases, is the close-up. Yet close-ups cannot be abused for the sake of wholly minor incident. I mention this merely as illustrating wherein the screen fails to catch the full illusion and concentrated attention of the stage. The screen loses out in a similar way when it comes to prolonged scenes between two or three people. The switching of the camera from one to the other breaks that feeling of tension which an audience gets when it can observe the characters simultaneously, and watch every small transition of emotion. This, of course, is purely a matter of camera perspective as distinct from the perspective of the human eye. But it has a great deal to do with the difficulty of using the screen for plays in which subtlety of character is of more importance than outward action.

The Aborn Revivals

THE GILBERT AND SULLIVAN revivals by the Milton Aborn company have just come to a close with another brilliant rendition of "The Mikado." The important point is that this business of light operative revivals is to continue with the works of other composers. The success of the Aborn group holds deep promise of an institution permanently devoted to light opera. May the promise come true!

BOOKS

Low I. Q.'s

Social Control of the Mentally Defective, by Stanley Powell Davies. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company. \$3.00.

THE PURPOSE of the author in this very helpful book is in his own words: to present mental deficiency in its social rather than in its clinical aspects, to show how the various phases of public opinion and action with reference to social control of the mentally deficient have changed significantly with the increase of our scientific knowledge of mental deficiency, and to indicate what a modern mental deficiency program might comprise. The book, remarkably sane in its outlook, its points of view, and its conclusions, is, in fact, a history of both our theoretical knowledge and our practical methods of dealing with the feeble-minded. It is an intelligent, a significant book, not marked as this problem is so often by pet theories and propaganda.

This book sets up for the feeble-minded the test of social competency, it defines the term, traces the history of our knowledge of mental deficiency, its European backgrounds and particularly its institutional development in America, our methods of controlling it socially. There are detailed discussions of the eugenic program and eugenic alarms, the relation of mental deficiency to delinquency, sterilization, segregation, heredity, the social institutions and heredity, and the significance of mental deficiency in the social order.

The mental test of feeble-mindedness is rejected. The absurdity of declaring as a result of the army tests that 50 percent of the nation is feeble-minded is made manifest. More than half of the army did show a mental age below thirteen. Dr. Davies takes the old mental age classification (idiots, mental age up to two years; imbeciles, three to seven years; and morons, seven to twelve years) and shows that many in the moron class are socially competent, earn their living, have no difficulties, and go about their way without any notice of social or governmental agencies. From the standpoint of the social test of feeble-mindedness, the estimate should be nearer $\frac{1}{2}$ percent or approximately a half million persons.

About the time "moron" became a part of our general vocabulary, there were dire predictions of the feeble-minded overrunning the nation, and the Nordics and the other virtuous people had to be protected by eugenic programs. Dr. Davies discusses this problem very pertinently under the heading of eugenic alarms. The background of the eugenics movement is sketched about its leader, Sir Francis Galton, but the discussion centers about names to conjure with, the Jukes and the Kallikaks. These became the symbol of the devastating effects all around us. Every kind of proposal was made to save us, including euthanasia, the immediate "snuffing out" of all defective stocks. Two methods secured consideration: sterilization and segregation. The history of the sterilization legislation is given, the attitude of courts, and its practical use in various states. The author concludes that "sterilization fails to recommend itself in the present state of our knowledge, as a measure of social control to be generally applied to the feeble-minded, or even to large classes of the feeble-minded. . . . Sterilization can in no sense be a substitute for segregation, training, and community supervision in the mental deficiency program."

Dr. Davies says in a later chapter, after reviewing the recent findings on heredity: "The one observation that can be safely made, in the opinion of the writer, in view of the more recent investigations of heredity and fecundity is that the hereditary

transmission of feeble-mindedness is neither so simple, nor so predictable, nor so alarming numerically, as was formerly believed."

Segregation was in the opinion of the Committee to Study and to Report on the Best Practical Means of Cutting Off the Defective Germ Plasm in the American Population, "the remedy which must be the principal agent used by society in cutting off its supply of defectives." Dr. Davies presents extensive data on the subject and concludes: "It is a matter of history that the two principal measures of social control on which main reliance was placed, during this period of alarm, for coping with the problem of mental deficiency, namely, sterilization and segregation, have failed to meet the situation as completely as the proponents of these measures had expected."

The remainder of the book is given over to the community provision for the care of the feeble-minded. It recognizes the fundamental distinction between the defective delinquents, about whom much of the alarmist literature was applicable, and the great body of mentally deficient who can be cared for adequately in the institutions, in colonies, in the communities under a general supervision and in the community without institutional supervision. The remarkable story of this progressive and intelligent procedure is succinctly told, with sufficient detail to show the development clearly.

For the general reader who desires a general and accurate knowledge of the subject the book is highly commended. It is even more highly commended to legislators who are so often the victims of propagandists, alarmists and panacea-mongers.

EDWARD A. FITZPATRICK.

Whoopee

Memories of the World War, by Major General Robert Alexander. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$4.00.

THE 77TH AMERICAN DIVISION took an active part in the advance through the Argonne and had, of course, seen previous service on other sections of the front. During most of the real fighting, the division was commanded by Major General Alexander, who now offers a volume of his memoirs. It is a remarkably complete summary of all the general saw, did and accomplished. Some of the incidents—notably the isolation of Major Whittlesey's battalion—are of a controversial nature, and by reason of them the volume acquires a general military significance. My purpose here is not to stress these last matters, about which several thousand better strategists than myself might argue until Doomsday, but to comment a little on the psychology of an American general as frankly annotated by himself.

General Alexander was, beyond any question, a good officer, able to estimate the potentialities of a given situation, to adjudge the qualities of subordinates, and to affect by personal example the morale of the troops serving under him. Whether his general assumptions were as correct as he himself supposes—whether, for example, open warfare would have been practicable under different conditions from those which obtained in 1918—may be left undecided. But on the whole one is agreeably convinced that such special qualifications as may be needed by a division commander were probably possessed in reasonably good measure by the chief officer of the 77th.

But as a man the general manifests a simplicity of mind, a naive arrogance and a shallowness of philosophic temper which astound when they do not disarm. To illustrate the second: The book is full of dirty digs at other officers, whom the general either considers incompetent because they disagreed with

him, or undesirable because of personalities. He is capable of going to no end of resentment because General Haan failed to give him a warm reception when he joined the 32nd. Now for the first point. It is manifested so fulsomely throughout these memoirs that one finds it difficult to make specific indications. The following passage, however, may suffice: "Personally I enjoyed the privilege of being presented to the King of England while on a short leave in London in March, 1919. His Majesty was affable and pleasant and, to my surprise and gratification, seemed well informed of the record of the 77th Division; knew that we had been in the Argonne and that our advance had been worthy of note. It is possible of course that he may have specially informed himself for the occasion but that is hardly probable." (!) The third indictment seems more important. It is to be taken for granted, of course, that a book like this should be dedicated to flag-waving, overemphasis of American achievement as contrasted with that of other armies, and to preparedness on a grand scale for future pleasant wars. But again and again one runs into this: ". . . The result would have been complete disorganization for all the invading forces in northern France and Belgium. The armistice, however, interposed and the enemy was permitted to withdraw in a semblance of order. That such a withdrawal was a political and military misfortune for the Allies will become more and more evident as time goes on. A lasting and satisfactory peace might have been signed in Germany, not in France." Frankly, as an American who lays no claim to ability to head a division but who does respect the tradition of his country, talk like that in the year 1931 is a source of shame. Doesn't the general realize even yet that the enemy which decimated the German army more thoroughly than even his superior strategy was hunger, and that this hunger had taken the lives of a half a million children? But it is probably too much to expect, in this age of specialization, that a man who prides himself on a diploma from Leavenworth should also be capable of thinking twice about something else.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Quaint Custom

The Comedy of Manners from Sheridan to Maugham, by Newell W. Sawyer. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. \$3.00.

THE WHOLE question of what constitutes purity to type in a work of art is involved in this interesting study by the professor of English at Heidelberg College. To isolate from the multifarious theatrical alloys the pure metal of the comedy of manners, Dr. Sawyer is compelled to use an extremely rigid test and working in the rich mine of English drama to discard more than he might otherwise accept. We are often deceived by appearances, he tells us. We may think we have the genuine article when lo, a taint of sentimentality is discovered, and the nugget is ruled out of class. The comedy of manners can be called by that name and appraised as such only when it reflects intellectually and dispassionately the "life, thoughts and manners of upper-class society." By such a standard many plays are found to be tricked out in gay society's dress when their real content is solemn or mawkish and their ultimate object is to point a moral.

The comedy of manners achieved its fine flowering with Congreve, Vanbrugh and Farquhar in the early part of the eighteenth century. Later with Sheridan's "School for Scandal" it lifted its head proudly again before subsiding under Puritan suppression and public taste toward moral earnestness for more

than a hundred years. In the nineties this form of entertainment enjoyed a thorough revival in the comedies of Oscar Wilde and in the lighter moods of Jones, Pinero and a few others. Then came the war. Since that time the unadulterated article has been somewhat hard to find. There have been Maugham's "The Circle," Lonsdale's "Aren't We All?" and the whimsicalities of A. A. Milne. But these are exceptions, and what passes for the comedy of manners in 1931 is not so true to form as certain plays which audiences saw and approved in the glorious live-and-let-live days attendant upon the Restoration.

In a final chapter Dr. Sawyer gives reasons why this is so and why the comedy of manners generally has been obliged to pursue such an up-and-down course. The chief of these reasons is that condition of the English temperament which "ill adjusts itself to the impersonal, intellectual type of comedy which does not touch the heart or stir the soul." Now this appears to be a sound enough argument, but what is to be done about it? If Anglo-Saxon playgoers must have their hearts touched and their souls stirred, why so it is and the comedy of manners will have to shift for itself. This, in fact, is somewhat the conclusion that the author reaches when he commits the future of this form of drama into the hands of a highly sophisticated and very select few and sees its continuance dependent upon the English gentleman and his code. The total effect of this book is to render the comedy of manners an all too precious cause, the defeat of which would leave neither readers nor audiences very heavy losers.

LONDON ROBINSON.

Certain Problems

American Society, by Charles F. Thwing. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

THE PRESIDENT EMERITUS of Western Reserve University has collected here essays published singly from 1911 to 1929. Those written while the World War was in progress are valuable now only as evidence of the impossibility of seeing what will follow such a complete upheaval. During the war, the English criticized themselves unsparingly and were wholeheartedly criticized by everybody else for "muddling through" without producing any one super-mind to which everybody could turn for infallible guidance. Yet they were the only people with whom this reviewer was associated who admitted honestly that they did not know everything, and for that reason each one "did his bit" to the very best of his ability—which spirit may be, after all, what won the war.

There is hardly any problem in the world today more complex than the one the author expresses in his title. American society is the product of English Liberal thought, founded principally by the Liberal aristocracy of England and strongly influenced by the English universities during our colonial period, but consistently and continuously influenced also by what Dr. Thomas Cuming Hall in a recent book, "The Religious Background of American Culture," calls "the Lollard mind." The fact is recognized by Dr. Thwing in his third essay, "The Pilgrims' Motive and Contribution," without seemingly realizing the full meaning of that fact and its weight in the scales of social, political and religious development.

Since we are, and have ever been the outgrowth of divergent groups (for the major part of our development within the same general racial category and today based upon racial differences almost as wide as humanity), it is quite legitimate for members and descendants of any one of these groups to be prejudiced in its favor. Still, descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers, and of

the New England group in general, are a little prone to discount everybody else, just as some Americans who have arrived more recently, and have thriven exceedingly under political and social conditions prepared for their thriving, tend now to believe that they did it all.

Those are complexities which cannot be left out of account in attempting to portray American society, but are not covered in this volume. In the opinion of this reviewer Dr. Thwing's strongest passages are contained in "The American Family" (1911), "Liberal Education after the Great War" (1918) and, in parts, in "Ruling Ideas in American Society" (1925).

It is characteristic, however, of the watertight compartments in which Americans live today, and through whose opaque walls each group sees the other so darkly and uncomprehendingly, that Dr. Thwing can see the Catholic Church in America "watching the movements and swiftly changing atmosphere of Protestant Christianity with keenest emotions."

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

The Noblest of Greek Dramas

The Antigone of Sophocles; translated by John Jay Chapman. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. \$10.00.

NO WORK of the Athenian dramatists has been translated into English more often than the "Antigone." It may be that the Latin mind would be more attracted to those tragedies where horror stalks unrestrained, and of course leisurely scholars and ambitious poets have been busy enough putting the "Oedipus" and the "Medea" and other more nerve-tearing plays into English; but to the Northern mind, with its predilection for measure and order, and its fondness for abstract moral theorizing, the story of the fate of the daughter of Oedipus is particularly sympathetic. The "Antigone," too, perfectly supports the conception of Sophocles as that one of the classic masters who stands nearest to these after-times both in his technique and in the motivation of his actions. Although the tragedy turns upon a point of Hellenic religious belief which awakens but faint echoes in the modern mind, yet events move to their cataclysmic climax by force of human emotions and human wills, and without those direct interventions of the gods (who when not cruel are always capricious) which make so many of the great Athenian tragedies hard fare for the modern reader or beholder.

Mr. Chapman, who already has to his credit certain Homeric translations as well as versions of the "Philoctetes" and the "Medea," of a quality far beyond those usual to the by-products of a busy life, has given us here certainly one of the strongest, clearest versions of the "Antigone" ever done in English. Although he has elided some passages, in what he gives he follows the text very closely, and does not wholly escape some of the difficulties involved in being literally true to the text on the one hand, and on the other hand, compelling his matter into the exacting forms of English blank verse. Yet the great force and majesty of the play are here: and in one respect it may well be that Mr. Chapman has achieved the ultimate in English renditions of Sophocles, for his choruses are beyond praise. Mastering their tremendous difficulties with a firm hand, he has magically transmuted their poetry across the lands, the seas and the centuries. This version therefore becomes indispensable to the student of the classic drama; and to possess this volume is an added delight, for it is a sumptuous bit of printing, and the paper used in the binding, especially designed by Mrs. Augustus Loring, deserves a particular word of appreciation.

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MEN'S HOSIERY—FIRST FLOOR

NEXT WEEK

Having completed its usual summer reducing exercises, THE COMMONWEAL is now ready to resume its normal dimensions. Next week's number looks like one of the best issues we have published in a long while. Ernest A. Dewey, who wrote for us a well-remembered paper on prohibition, contributes THE FARMER'S SANTA CLAUS, a study of the present state of mind in wheat-growing Kansas. There political figures are toppling off pedestals, dissatisfaction is rampant, and wheat sells for \$.25 a bushel. But Mr. Dewey is too shrewd an observer to be merely a propagandist. . . . Dr. James J. Walsh was in Mexico City during the past summer, and sent us an impressive sketch of religious life south of the Rio Grande. MEXICO ON SUNDAY MORNING is the fruit of canny observation and real sympathy. . . . No political personage is so widely discussed today as Chancellor Bruening, whose steady piloting of the German ship of state through stormy waters has elicited general esteem. THIS MAN BRUENING is the best sketch of his personal character we have seen. It is written by Dr. Max Jordan, well-known journalist, who is now serving as one of THE COMMONWEAL correspondents abroad. . . . A little thinking now and then harms not even the busiest men. DARING AND THE PHILOSOPHER, by Father John K. Ryan, is an evaluation of valor and caution as they affect the philosophical mind. . . . Paradoxes have not yet gone out of style, as is revealed by the fact that one figures in the title and conception of Margaret M. Williamson's paper, FUTURES IN ANTIQUES. . . . And possibly there will be something else.

Barbara

The Pure in Heart, by Franz Werfel; translated by Geoffrey Dunlop. New York: Simon and Schuster. \$3.00.

PERHAPS no contemporary writer has more to say than does Franz Werfel. His plays may have left most of us bewildered in the attempt to understand their meaning, but that meaning was clearly present and impressive. Werfel's drama gains significance by its power to evoke the perpetual spiritual conflict in the heart of every man. His novels create an atmosphere of intimacy and a sense of having been taken into the author's confidence. Of them "The Pure in Heart" has been best received—has, indeed, created an almost awe-inspiring stir.

Ferdinand is a doctor on a palatial Mediterranean liner. As the ship nears Cape Matapan, he begins the process of remembering his life. He calls to mind early scenes between father and mother, culminating in a final one with another man in the picture. Then his young mother and her artillery captain vanish, and Ferdinand is left with his middle-aged father, the colonel, and his nurse Barbara. This woman he loves as a mother; she becomes the central influence in his life. After his father's death he is sent to a military school and later to a theological seminary, which he leaves to study medicine. Soon the war comes, and he serves until near the end when he meets a group of intellectuals gathered on the eve of the Vienna revolution. His association with this group bitterly disillusiones him and makes him see the chaos of existing society. But he completes his studies and takes his degree. For a long time he had neglected Barbara, not because he did not long to see her but because he could not bring himself to describe his struggles and needs. Now he goes back to her. She had known he would return, and had kept all the savings of her lifetime for him. He accepts the gold, resolving not to use it except in dire need. On the ship he has a feeling that Barbara no longer lives. His first reaction is to get the legacy and count the coins. He had used twenty-four of the original total of 120—a fact he sums up bitterly as a tribute life has exacted of him. He determines to drop the bag into the sea; it seems to him a fitting grave for Barbara's gold. And as he turns from the handrail, new strength courses through him.

Barbara is the heart of the book. She is truly pure of soul, very close to God. To her God is a trustworthy flame, a "sense of being eternally upborne." Her faith and love took possession of Ferdinand's lonely little heart; and in the years to come her love, tenderness and steadfastness never fail him. From her he learned how to feel the presence of God, and that lesson could never be totally obscured by doubts.

Another character of vital importance is Engländer, Ferdinand's dearest friend. He is an intelligent Jew, firmly convinced of the truth of Christianity. One feels that Werfel uses Engländer as the mouthpiece for his own convictions. When he says, "Cleverness without God—that's your modern intellectual—or rather it's your modern fool," one has a fancy that the author himself is speaking. That human bankruptcy follows human godlessness is the theme of "The Pure in Heart." Again Engländer's cherished dream of reconciliation between Judaism and the Catholic Church, "the only two existing bodies today which remain, so to speak, unchanged, eternal," one may also surmise to be of more than usual interest to Werfel, who has been both a Jew and a Catholic.

"The Pure in Heart" is a really significant novel, which will appeal to everyone interested in a commentary on modern Continental civilization.

DORIS CUNNINGHAM.

For A' That

The Life of Robert Burns, by Catherine Carswell. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$3.75.

ROBERT BURNS: few men have had a greater claim upon posterity; none has suffered more in its hands. While he was yet alive, the very voices that sang his songs, derisively whispered his acts. So has it been with his biographers and critics. At times they have been even lavish with their praise of his singular gift, but in considering Burns, the man, have been wont to condemn, scoff, exploit. In this critical banter there is a striking lack of perhaps the two most essential qualities of good biography writing: understanding and sympathy.

"Who shall keep the curs out of the graveyard?" was Baudelaire's question after reading a study of Poe. Happily Catherine Carswell brings new clods of clay to strengthen Burns's grave, and armfuls of blossoms to beautify it.

Robin Burns, as he was intermittently called, came into this life under the most commonplace of circumstances; circumstances which at an early age brought him into the fields to share the menial labors of the Scottish farmer. The Burns family was always poor; but the father, a God-fearing, sensitive man, would have his children learn, and not only gave them the best of his own rustic intellect, but went to great sacrifice that they might attend school. Schoolmaster Murdock became a regular participant in the evening sessions of reading and discussion in the Burns household.

One particular harvest-time when Robin was about fifteen, he met Nelly. Nelly could sing and she could cause his heart "to beat like a drum." Soon came his first song—a love song—as was his last. And "with Nelly he had discovered 'the highest, and indeed the only enjoyment in life'—that is to say, love and poetry, which for him sprang from a single root and must forever be indivisible."

Thus the Ploughman Poet began his singing and so it went throughout his days. Burns was a genius, a consummate artist, with that rare power to say precisely what he wanted to say—to set a scene, to paint a portrait with a simple rhyme or a line of words. Burns's lyrics sparkle with a special brilliance. He is not simply the Bard of Scotland, but a bard of mankind. His songs are for everyone, lettered or unlettered, poor or rich. Certainly no other songster has enjoyed such universal esteem. He has fulfilled the hope he expressed:

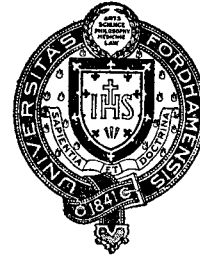
"Give me a spark o' nature's fire,
That's a' the learning I desire;
Then, tho' I drudge thro' dub an' mire
At pleugh or cart,
My muse, though hamely in attire,
May touch the heart."

But the brightest flame dies the quickest. Continual poverty, the inheritance of his father's physique, and, as he wrote of himself, "the miserable victim of rebellious pride, hypochondriac imagination, agonizing sensibilities, and bedlam passions"—these qualities would destine any man to an early grave.

Catherine Carswell has written his life with brilliance, understanding and sympathy; she has at once shown herself to be a gentlewoman and a scholar; she has more than justified her own hope

"That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake
Some usfu' plan or beuk could make."

ERIC DEVINE.



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Our Neighbor

Mexico: A Study of Two Americas, by Stuart Chase. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$3.00.

Liberalism in Mexico, 1857-1929, by Wilfrid Hardy Calcott. Stanford University, California: Stanford University Press. \$5.00.

IN THE midst of last winter's depression Stuart Chase went to Mexico. He visited districts ignorant of business cycles, cities innocent of instalment buying and towns serenely unaware of automobiles. He found virtually no unemployment and, save in a few centers, no repercussion of the world-overproduction. With the superb "wantlessness" of the Indian—Chase recognizes the predominance of the Indian in Mexican life—the inhabitants were able to satisfy all their needs from regional production and had plenty of time left over to play, actually one day in three for their fiestas, according to Chase's figures.

To the author of "Men and Machines" this scene was fascinating as a matter of comparative sociology. For wherever he went in Mexico he applied the measuring-stick of "Middletown, U. S. A.," and discovered that primitive towns like Tepotzlan profited by the comparison. His appreciation of these independent communities, however, is tempered by good sense and he admits that machine civilization can contribute something to their apparent self-sufficiency in such matters as hygiene, medicine, water power, moderate use of the automobile, telephone and other such inventions.

The book is no dry economic tract. It abounds in graphic pictures, sly observations, fresh viewpoints on Mexican life and history. Particularly to be commended is his sane appraisal of Cortez and the conquest. A concluding chapter offers advice to Mexico, a chapter which readers of Chase will not be surprised to find charmingly different from the usual condescending sermons uttered by dollar-chasing gringos.

Professor Calcott's book represents the spade-work by means of which writers like Chase form their attractive generalizations about Mexican history. In a style perhaps needlessly academic, the author traces the Liberal movement in Mexico from Juarez to Portes Gil. More thorough than Bancroft, less laborious than Priestley and unhandicapped by the Liberal zeal of Gruening, Professor Calcott has been able to make a valuable contribution to historical literature on Mexico. The virtues and defects of the Diaz régime are judiciously weighed, and the picture, very well documented, of the convention which framed the famous Constitution of 1917 in itself justifies the existence of the volume. There is appended an excellent bibliography.

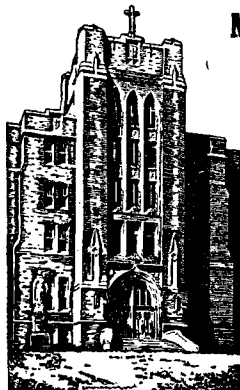
FRANK C. HANIGHEN.

Dignified Racketeer

Fighting Fitzgerald and Other Papers, by Mary MacCarthy. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$3.50.

HERE is the first biographical sketch of George Robert Fitzgerald of Turlough, that paradox of a mortal, perhaps possible only in Ireland and then only in his time, the period which Yeats has called "the splendid misunderstanding of the eighteenth century." Heretofore told by Irish firesides, Fighting Fitzgerald's life story is now authentically set down in one of the most interesting books of the year, and, incidentally, in these drab days forming an excellent vehicle of escape for those of us seeking vicarious stimulation in the synthetic spilt of racketeer stories.

Born a gentleman of high lineage and well-educated, "Fighting Fitz" blazed his way over the Continent, provoking duels



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at every turn and at last returning to Ireland to "settle down." Irish society of that time was not as peaceful or stabilized as it is today. All the gentry were servants of the sword and saddle, at all times richly human, and many of them wooed the Muses and were most admirable figures. Into this hard-riding, hard-drinking squirarchy came Fitzgerald, the most reckless of all. He continued to live his life out in comic tumult, only to end it in tragedy, a scapegrace on the scaffold. A curious mixture of a man, madman and hero, and understood only as a child of his unbridled time who choose wilfully to live in violence.

The author also gives us equally interesting sketches of three other members of the Fitzgerald family: Lord Hervey, George II's vice-chamberlain, and enemy of Pope; the famous Bishop of Derry; and "Humanity" Martin of Galway, "King of Connemara," the finest Irish "gentleman-to-the-backbone" of his generation and the founder of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. His Animal Act, which he literally forced into the English statute against the jeers of all Britain, is the parent of all laws relating to the protection of beasts; and he elevated the whole standard of the feeling of mankind for God's dumb creatures. He was also one of the pioneers of Catholic Emancipation. His whole life was marked by a humanity far in advance of his time.

The author tells her story well. More engrossing than fiction and rich in historical interest, her book brings these four characters forth with a fine distinctiveness from that rollicking if not most inspiring period of Irish history, and affords broad surveys of the colorful background against which they moved. An appendix and bibliography are attached.

T. FRANCIS HEALY.

Harper Prize

Brothers in the West, by Robert Raynolds. New York: Harper and Brothers. \$2.50.

THE FACT that Robert Raynolds is a young writer of evident power, possessed of a keen feeling for primitive nature and an often eloquent manner of expressing that feeling, is probably the reason why the judges chose "Brothers in the West" as the Harper Prize novel for 1931-1932. For beyond these virtues, which are real and rare, Mr. Raynolds shows little else.

Indeed in the "Prologue" of eight pages he gives the reader about all he can carry away with profit from the book. In these eight pages one sees and feels the two brothers, the quality of their minds, and their love for each other. The story which follows adds nothing, and indeed by its confusion of motive takes away not a little. From the "Prologue" one learns that the brothers are wanderers, but in the story there is no real explanation of why they wander, and despite many poignantly written episodes, the brothers themselves become blurred in outline.

Mr. Raynolds has an understanding of the frontier, but his understanding of men and women of the frontier is very much less certain. They may have been simple in their emotions but they are basically children of tradition, and they were far from "emancipated" in the modern sense. The truth of the matter is that while Mr. Reynolds has an understanding of the mechanics of life on the frontier, his understanding ends there. Moreover, he does not seem to be able to express any unity of theme. Admirable as he is in painting separate episodes, he fails to impart to them any connected meaning. Mr. Raynolds has promise, but as a novelist and a thinker he is as yet immature.

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Briefer Mention

Rainer Maria Rilke, by Federico Olivero. Cambridge, England: W. Heffer and Sons, Ltd. 7s 6d.

THAT Rilke was a great poet, in all likelihood (with Stefan George) one of the few important German writers of his age, has often been said. The reading public of the United States, however, has not yet correlated his lyrics with those of other mystical poets like Francis Thompson and Emily Dickinson. Rilke was, to be sure, a seeker after God rather than one at rest, securely, in the Divine presence. This definition has been accepted reverently in the present extensive study of the poet's achievement, by an Italian Catholic critic. The book suffers from a failure to restrict the involutions of the theme to the limitations imposed by the subject as a whole. It is too fulsome on some matters, disappointingly laconic on others. But as a whole it is really a discerning study based upon a comparative estimate of modern mystical verse. The finest sections are those devoted to the *Stundenbuch*, and the best writing concerns itself with Rilke's imagery. One hopes the book will help to make a place in many hearts for poetry unquestionably immortal.

Macbeth; edited by Joseph Quincy Adams. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. \$2.00.

PROFESSOR ADAMS bids fair to offer the first nearly adequate annotated edition of the Shakespeare plays. Last year, we commented on his "Hamlet," expressing the opinion that it had reached the mean between purely impressionistic comment and pedantic appendices. Quite as much can be said for the present "Macbeth," which offers an excellently clarified text, all the glossary needed where wanted, and an ample commentary. Concerning this last there will naturally be some difference of opinion, and to our mind it is overwritten. Nor are we convinced that much of the familiar explanatory terminology deserves retaining. Why, for example, should it be said that humor in the tragedies is inserted to afford "emotional relief"? Perhaps it would be better to say that Shakespeare knows the value of contrast in life and art. However all such things may be, the edition is something to regard with pleasure and with gratitude.

CONTRIBUTORS

HENRY SOMERVILLE is a writer on economics and London correspondent for the *Toronto Star*.

K. K. KAWAKAMI is Washington representative of the *Hochi*, a daily newspaper in Tokio.

WILLIAM GRIFFITH is president of the Poetry Society of America and the author of several volumes of poems including "Loves and Losses of Pierrot."

REV. JOHN O'GRADY is professor of sociology in the Catholic University of America and secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Charities. MORROW MAYO, journalist, is former staff editor of the *Associated Press* and a contributor to current periodicals.

LEONID I. STRAKHOVSKY is a lecturer in the School of Foreign Service of Georgetown University and special correspondent of the Russian newspapers, *Rul* published in Berlin, *Svezdnja* published in Riga, and *Novoye Russkoye Slovo* published in New York.

PAUL KAVANAGH is a lawyer of New Zealand and a contributor to Catholic journals.

JOHN HANLON is a contemporary poet of Halifax, Nova Scotia. EDWARD A. FITZPATRICK is dean of the Graduate School of Marquette University and president of Mount Mary College and the author of several books.

LONDON ROBINSON is a writer of literary criticism for American magazines.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS, formerly in the American diplomatic service, is an authority on international affairs.

SHAEMAS O'SHEEL, poet, reviewer and essayist, is the author of "Jealous of Dead Leaves."

DORIS CUNNINGHAM is a critic for the literary reviews.

ERIC DEVINE is staff writer for *Country Life* and a contributor to other periodicals.

FRANK C. HANIGHEN contributes articles to current periodicals and makes translations from the French.

T. FRANCIS HEALY contributes to literary reviews.

GREVILLE VERNON is the author of "The Image in the Path."